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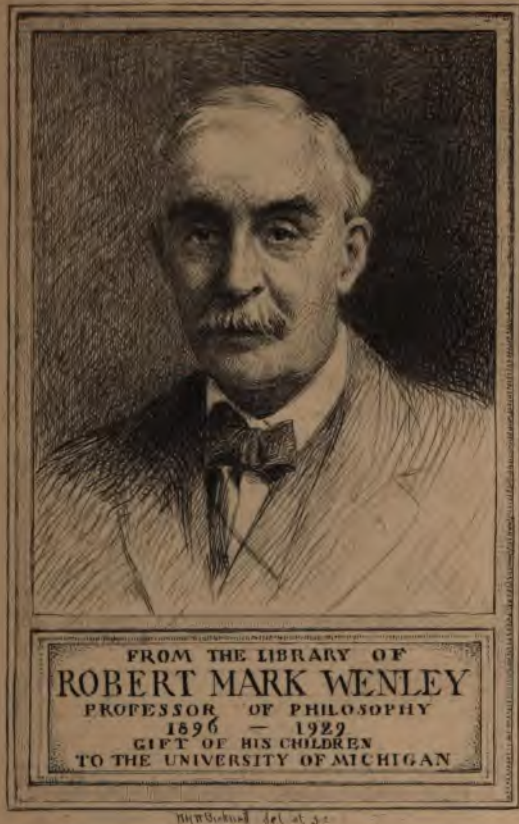

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CHARACTERISTICS

OF

HE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.

SOCRATES AND PLATO.

BY THE

REV. JOHN PHILIPS POTTER, A.M.,

LATE OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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TO THE

RIGHT REV. JOHN KAYE, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

My Lord,

I trust your Lordship will not find in these pages, nor in any which may follow them, thoughts or expressions which may cause you to regret the permission you have kindly granted me to dedicate this work to your Lordship. I am not using the language of flattery when I say that to no Bishop on the Bench, nor to any minister of Christ, could I dedicate this little work with so much satisfaction, because your Lordship's character as a scholar, a divine, and a Christian, assures one who is conscious of right intentions of a fair and a kind hearing.

I am, my Lord,
with great respect,
your Lordship's
faithful and obliged Servant,
THE AUTHOR.

London,
March 3rd, 1845.

12-7-37

PREFACE.

It is proposed to consider the character of Socrates under three aspects—Socrates Theologus, Socrates Politicus, and Socrates Logicus; and it is hoped that the second and third parts of this work will be comprised in a space not larger than is occupied by the first part.

I beg to offer my best thanks to Mr. Mill for the encouragement he gave me to proceed with remarks and notes on the character of Socrates, and for the trouble he took to obtain the insertion of my first essay in the pages of the *British and Foreign Quarterly*.

I beg also to thank my excellent friend the Rev. J. H. Howlett, for introducing this work to the notice of the Prelate to whom it is dedicated, and I trust he will find no reason for regretting the kind interest which he has taken in its progress.

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CHARACTERISTICS

OF

THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.

ERRATA.

Page 86, line 3, *read* quæ, *for* quis.
„ 174, „ 13, *read* on, *for* in.
„ 198, „ 17, *read* from, *for* for.
„ „ last line in page, *read* nothing, *for* knowing.

let the wreath be taken from his honoured brow—*detur digniori*, to Bacon or to Bentham. But if hasty and irreverent hands have been laid on a sacred head, sacred for piety, morality and public principle,—sacred to philosophy, and not disowned by science,—then let those irreverent hands be as openly withdrawn as they

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* This Essay was first printed in the Twenty-eighth Number of the *British and Foreign Quarterly*, as a review of the following works:—

1 *The Memorabilia of Xenophon, &c.*, translated by several Hands.
2 *The Comedies of Aristophanes.* By T. MITCHELL, A.M.
3 *The Life of Socrates.* By Dr. G. WIGGERS. Translated from the German, with Notes.

This will partly account for the form in which the other Essays are cast.

have been put forth. Let his modern accusers express regret for having spoken lightly and slightingly of his philosophy. The great names of Bacon and Bentham would be tarnished, their philosophy, if not their science, would be called in question, could it be supposed that they would not recommend restitution and penitence for wrong done.

We need not be told that to express doubt or disbelief of the moral claims of a heathen, be he philosopher or statesman, is popular with a large and influential party. Such mystifications, we suppose they must be called, are thought to establish the doctrines of original sin and human corruption more firmly. Alas! these doctrines need no such false support. They may more safely be rested on the fact that the many require and the few yield such poor compliances, than by doubting or denying the moral claims of Socrates.

But, it will be urged, our learned universities, the supposed guardians of the mighty dead of Greece and Rome, silently permit these assertions to be made;—nay, that their more celebrated scholars, when they write about Socrates, give their countenance to the learned men of foreign countries who have raised doubts about his character and philosophy; and that all this is in agreement with the fact that that philosophy is very insufficiently studied in our universities.

A scholar of whom England may be proud has urged the claims* of that portion of ancient history which includes the period of Socrates upon the especial attention of our own times, on the ground that the history of Thucydides exhibits a great example of the very evils, political and moral (we add religious also), which are threatening ourselves. We would ask scholars and historians whether the philosophy of those times does not come home to our business and bosoms

* See Notes in the first vol. of Dr. ARNOLD's *Thucydides*.

quite as closely as its history. If Thucydides exhibits the very diagnosis of our own case, Socrates no less certainly indicates what, *mutatis mutandis*, should be its treatment. If the one shows our danger, the other points out our means of escape. And though we may regret that the reviewer of Bacon and the editor of Bentham have spoken of Socrates in a manner so slighting, as to indispose their readers from any serious inquiry into his philosophy, and consequently into the remedies he recommends, yet if we succeed in proving that they have spoken lightly and inconsiderately, rhetorically and *ad captandum vulgus*, we will hope that their names may do more towards giving interest to the question, than their opinions obstruct its fair consideration.

The reviewer of Bacon contrasts a foolish dictum of Seneca, "Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad usus necessarios opifex, philosophia*," with what he sets forth as the very motto of Bacon's philosophy, "Dignitatem ingenii et nominis mei, si quæ sit, sæpius sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam†," and then arrives at his conclusion,(rather more rhetorically, we think, than logically, for he takes no notice of the peculiar wants of the different periods, and the consequently different objects of philosophy in each,) in the following words: "The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred, tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy, from the time of Socrates downwards; and took possession of intellects with which that of Seneca cannot, for a moment, be compared. It pervades the *Dialogues* of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints from which it may be inferred, that in his opinion the pre-

* "Philosophy is no inventor of machines for everyday wants."

† "I willingly sacrifice the dignity of my genius and reputation, if I have any, whenever I can promote men's comforts."

valence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event; and he constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors. —Assuredly," continues the reviewer of Bacon, "if the tree which Socrates planted, and Plato watered, is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon,—if we judge of the tree by its *fruits*, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favourable. We are forced to say with Bacon, that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation*." If this be so, it was indeed a most impotent conclusion to a swelling prologue. But we shall see.

Having passed this sweeping condemnation on the philosophy of Greece, and especially on the philosophy of Socrates, the reviewer of Bacon proceeds to compare Bacon's views on some important questions with those of Plato, in order to establish the above bold assertion. We object *in limine* to the selection. We would not have the philosophy of Socrates estimated by the theories of Plato. In a fairer spirit, when speaking of "Aristotle and his philosophy," the reviewer of Bacon says, "Many of the great reformers treated the peripatetic philosophy with contempt, and spoke of Aristotle as if Aristotle had been answerable for the dogmas of Thomas Aquinas†." Let this fair remark be carried out in the case of Socrates, and let him not be made answerable for the dogmas of Plato, unless these can be brought home to him on less questionable evidence. For were we to make him answer for all that Plato puts into his mouth, we should make him the pro-

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 132, p. 67. † Page 72.

pounder of some things so abominable, and of others so ridiculous, as to be obviously at variance, not only with his sound principles and good sense, but with his declared opinions. It would be just as fair to take our estimate of his philosophy from the audacious buffoonery of Aristophanes as from the wilder theories of Plato, though Plato puts these, as he puts all his theories, into the mouth of Socrates.

In estimating his character and philosophy we must check each of his biographers by the other. Xenophon had a simple and deep reverence for his master in virtue, and records facts and opinions with scrupulous fidelity. Plato had great admiration for his master in philosophy, yet makes him the medium of propounding his own theories. Though we might expect him to communicate thoughts and theories to the discursive and enthusiastic Plato which he might never think of propounding to the less speculative and imaginative Xenophon, still there are theories put by Plato into the mouth of Socrates, which do not harmonise with his prudence and temperance, not to say purity of character and elevation of principle, and which, therefore, require us to examine them by all the evidence we can derive from Xenophon and Aristotle, and to compare them with other parts of his philosophy as set forth by Plato, and so to decide whether they do not flow from something idiosyncrasic in the character, objects, and connections of Plato, rather than from the head or heart of his master.

Thus the theory of a community of women is utterly unlike the prudence, temperance, purity and good sense of Socrates. Some of its details are so absurd, as to be as irreconcileable with good sense and keen humour, as with some of his declared opinions on such subjects. When, on the other hand, we remember the constitution, manners, and morals of Plato's Sicilian, not to say his Grecian patrons, and the temp-

tation these must have held out to Plato to provide them with inducements to give his politics a hearing and a trial; and when we add to all this the hints he had picked up from his priestly friends in Egypt as to the conveniences to be afforded to a standing army* by a people amongst whom it was to live at free quarters; and when we farther bear in mind that Socrates is the organ through which Plato (a speculatist in religion, in morals, and in politics,) propounds all his theories, we think there will remain little difficulty in the *suum cuique tribuito* of the instance in question. The modicum, or rather modiculum of doubt which may still remain, whether the celebrated theory of a community of women belongs altogether to Plato, (at least does not belong at all to Socrates,) will be entirely removed when we come to consider the known opinions of Socrates on such subjects. Indeed, we have only started this question in order to draw attention to the manifest unfairness of estimating his philosophy by the theories of Plato.

Again, in reference to the manner of Socrates, both in teaching and conversing, and, generally, in social intercourse, we must remember that if Plato was a veritable Ionian, easy, flowing, graceful, sensitive, imaginative and full of discourse,—Xenophon, on the other hand, was, not indeed a veritable Dorian, but certainly much more than an affecter, even in the best sense of the expression, of the simplicity and brevity, of the practicalness and common sense, of the Doric character. But if the calmness of Xenophon's nature, the simplicity of his tastes, the coldness of his imagi-

---

* The Reverend author of the *Subaltern* suggests as a cure for what he states respecting the wide-spread profligacy of Prussia, the establishment of a national church. We will take leave to ask, whether the suppression of a standing army might not be as wise a measure. Any system of celibataires, whether monastic or militant, tends to the injury of sound principle, and the introduction of bad practices.

nation, and the watchfulness of his prudence, (especially when viewing with reverence his master in virtue, gone to his tomb, and become an object almost of heroic worship,) may have caused him to fall short of the joyous *abandon* and free *excursus* of a bolder mind and a warmer heart than his own, (and we believe there never was a bolder mind nor a warmer heart, united to a sounder prudence and a keener sagacity, and a more entire absence of all sentiment and affectation, than that of Socrates,) yet even these very defects fitted him to be a check upon the copiousness, imaginativeness, and freedom, not to say licence, of Plato; especially when it is farther remembered that Plato's report of Socrates is evidently, from beginning to end, not only a beau ideal but Plato's beau ideal, if not of the philosophic character, at least of the character, manners, and principles of Socrates. We therefore again repeat, that in estimating his character and philosophy, and even his manner of teaching, we must check each of his biographers by the other; and that, for the reasons we have assigned, Xenophon himself a disciple, and not the founder of a school, must be considered the higher authority whenever their witnesses disagree, unless there be some especial reason for making an exception to this rule; lastly, when their evidence agrees, the genius of Plato may be admitted to give spirit and effect to what Xenophon more coldly, even when more correctly, represents.

The *Memorabilia* of Xenophon is a possession for all time; for the noble simplicity of the style is worthy of the purity and soundness of the principles. Indeed, who can mark without admiration the strong sense, the good feeling, the high principles and the right practices of this book? It bears the same ratio to the *Dialogues* of Plato, that the practical teaching of the Gospels does to the doctrinal teaching of the Epistles. He who runs may read. It was a great service which

Socrates rendered his countrymen. He cleared the foundations of religion and morals from whatever was obscuring and undermining them. He exhibited these foundations in all their strength, and showed that principles and conduct may be safely rested upon them. The very characteristic of Socrates' philosophy is the grand simplicity of a Doric temple. He states the great principles of religion and morals, and politics, so clearly and convincingly, that every one must understand, and no one can deny. The sincerity of the manner is equal to the truth of the matter. And to all this must be added a genial warmth of feeling, whether it be shewn in deep reverence for God, or in hearty love to man, which it is impossible to resist; for whilst Socrates states truth so convincingly as to compel assent, he urges it so kindly as to win conviction.

It is obvious that the first two chapters of the *Memorabilia* contain Xenophon's "Apology for Socrates," and that the *Apologia* commonly attributed to Xenophon should be rejected as superfluous, even if it were less manifestly an awkward compilation from the pages of the *Memorabilia*. We may compare the Apology which Xenophon *writes* in defence of his master's fame after his death, with the Apology which Plato makes him *speak* at his trial; the plain earnestness of Xenophon's manner when writing in his master's defence with the playful irony (in Socrates perfectly and admirably and wonderfully compatible with the clearest manifestation of an earnest sincerity of purpose) which Plato makes Socrates use when compelled to speak in his own defence. Each composition has the reality which befits it. But for the pseudo-Apology attributed to Xenophon, even if Socrates could have stolen it from the pages not then written, (for it is obvious which is the original,) he could not have had the assurance to praise himself so

flatly, not even if he had complicated the blunder, by attributing these platitudes to the oracles of Apollo.

Observe the simple earnestness of the opening sentence of the *Memorabilia*. "I have often wondered by what arguments the accusers of Socrates could persuade the Athenians that he had behaved in such a manner as to deserve death; for the accusation preferred against him was to this effect;—Socrates is criminal, inasmuch as he acknowledgeth not the Gods whom the republic holds sacred, but introduceth other and new deities: he is likewise criminal, because he corrupteth the youth."

Such a charge, grave at all times, was a capital accusation then. Led into the Peloponnesian war by the deep designs of the philosophical and innovating Pericles; hurried into the disastrous war with Sicily by the vast ambition of the irreligious and profligate Alcibiades; drawn forward by the train of events this new policy had set in motion to the fatal defeat of Ægos Potami, and the consequent ruin of the constitution under Critias and the Thirty Tyrants, no wonder that the people of Athens, when they had freed themselves from that tyrannic oligarchy, felt sick of the innovating policy which had caused such a series of disasters, and longed to return from the philosophy of Pericles, the impiety of Alcibiades and the injustice of Critias, into the old paths of religion and morality. Under such circumstances the accusation we have recorded was brought against Socrates. Was he, or had he been, in fault? Could the progress of innovation, impiety and profligacy be fairly charged upon him? It is impossible to answer this question without glancing at the state of religion in Greece.

On what did the popular religion of Greece rest? On the noble images of Homer, supported by solemn mysteries. We must remember (however difficult it may be for us to realize the fact to our minds) that

Homer was the Old Testament of Greece; and that the belief and rites set forth in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were in fact the faith and worship, under two modes of acceptation, of Greece and of her colonies. Indeed, whoever will read Homer in a simple and earnest spirit (and if he do *not* read in that spirit, his admiration will be affected, and only his weariness will be real,) will find no difficulty in clearly distinguishing the popular belief from the secret wisdom contained, for example, in the first book of the *Iliad*. He will feel that in the godlike forms of Jupiter and Apollo, Juno and Minerva, was found all that the idolatrous worship of a simple age required; whilst Agamemnon, and Nestor, and Achilles, were adequate models for human imitation of an excellence considered half divine. He will perceive that knowledge short of initiation would suggest vague ideas of the secret meaning of this hieroglyphic writing; exhibiting Jupiter, the supreme god of air, the lord of life and intellect, united to Juno, the principle of matter, the recipient of forms, in no very harmonious or dignified bonds, the perfect with the imperfect. Respecting secondary causes and ministering spirits, why the goddess of wisdom should be the daughter of intellect, why the god of war should be the son of matter, or why the god of fire and its arts should be the imperfect offspring of both parents, will be perceived to be myths of no very difficult solution. Nor would it require any very deep knowledge of the application of metaphorical language to physics and metaphysics, to understand the rationale of uniting in the character of Apollo physical light with intellectual illumination; or to explain why the god of light and heat should, in calling forth droughts and pestilence, be set forth as more favourable to the native than to the crusading foreigner. Here, then, was a system of idolatrous worship and mysterious wisdom, sufficient for the

childhood of civilization; for it is not difficult to conceive that the idolater might prostrate his body before the form, and the mystic might bow his intellect before the meaning, and both might unite in a worship of rites and ceremonies, in which the statesman, poet, priest and diviner, would each find his fitting place, and would exercise an influence more or less in accordance with the designs of the legislator.

But it was impossible that the end of these things should not come. To such a system, half truth and half falsehood, half piety and half superstition, half expedient and half mischievous, half belief and half scepticism, the poet himself was a dangerous ally; and we pass rapidly from the pious reverence of Homer to the free strictures of Pindar, from the bold censures of Æschylus to the serious indignation of Euripides, from the audacious ridicule of Aristophanes (with the open impiety of Alcibiades as a practical commentary) to the philosophic contempt of Lucian and of the world. What a different picture of belief and worship, of faith and practice, do Homer and Aristophanes exhibit! For we may be assured that the religious farces of Aristophanes were as destructive of all serious religious impression in their day, as if our own theatres should present our ancient mysteries in the guise of wild and ludicrous pantomimes. Let any one turn from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* to the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, or pass onward from the Jove of Homer, sitting in lonely majesty and shaking Olympus with his nod, to the Jupiter of Aristophanes, as approached, not by the glancing Iris or the winged Mercury, but by Trygæus mounted upon a beetle; or let him contemplate the gods of Olympus cheated out of the fumes of their sacrifices by the Birds, and he will see that such bold farces* prepared the way for

* Even Mr. Mitchell allows that "the character of the heathen divinities is generally treated with sufficient freedom by Aristophanes" (p. 121);

the contemptuous wit of Lucian, by turning the gods of Homer into the Punch and Judy of a classical show-box. And yet Mr. Mitchell and his German authorities would have us receive Aristophanes as a genuine Puseyite of the olden time, earnestly bent, good man, on restoring the primitive belief, and pure worship and strict discipline of Homer. But more of this anon.

Under these circumstances of daily increasing scepticism, irreligion and impiety, what was the conduct of Socrates? Listen to the indignant answer Xenophon makes to the accusation he records; and say if there is not sincerity and truth in every word of it.

"Now as to the first of these accusations,—that he acknowledged not the gods whom the republic held sacred,—what proof could they bring of this, since it was manifest that he often sacrificed, both at home and on the common altars? Neither was it in secret that he made use of divination; it being a thing well known among the people, that Socrates should declare that his *genius* gave him frequent intimations of the future; whence, principally, as it seems to me, his accusers imputed to him the crime of introducing new deities. But surely herein Socrates introduced nothing newer or more strange than any other, who, placing confidence in divination, make use of auguries, and omens, and symbols, and sacrifices. For these men suppose not that the birds, or persons they meet unexpectedly, know what is good for them; but that the gods, by their means, give certain intimations of the future to those who apply themselves to divination. And the same also was his opinion, only with this difference, that whilst the greatest part say they are persuaded or dissuaded by the flights of birds, or some accidental occurrence, Socrates, on the con-

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and in another passage speaks of Aristophanes as holding "all the superstitious ceremonies of the heathen religion in contempt" (p. 64); yet in the whole tone of his criticisms he praises this Aristophanes for "imputing atheistical opinions in common to Socrates and Diagoras" (p. 93). Dat veniam corvis—vexat censura columbas.

trary, so asserted concerning these matters, as he knew them from an internal consciousness; declaring it was his *genius* from whom he received his information. And, in consequence of these significations, (communicated, as he said, by his *genius*,) Socrates would frequently forewarn his friends what might be well for them to do, and what to forbear; and such as were guided by his advice found their advantage in so doing, while those who neglected it had no small cause for repentance*."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 1.

Respecting that part of the above answer which speaks of Socrates sacrificing on the public altars, it is plain that he employed the rites of his country, in public and in private, as an outward expression of his own deep and rational piety, which, as it could "see God in storms and hear him in the wind," with the barbarian, and could worship Him in the classical rites and ceremonies of the Greek, so he recognised the Divine Voice most distinctly in the clear inferences of a sound reason, and in the warning accents of a healthful conscience. And so great was the prudence he derived from that sound reason, and so right was the conduct he practised at the suggestion of that healthful conscience, that "such as were guided by his advice found their advantage in so doing;" or, in other words, they found that what is reasonable and conscientious, what is true and sincere, is ever, in the long run, expedient also.

In complying with the rites of his country, Socrates avoided her superstitions. The rite of sacrifice, so simple and natural that it harmonises with all and any religious truth, required to be guarded against a great abuse, and against this he warned his countrymen.

"When he sacrificed, he feared not his offering would

* My reason for adopting the generally received translations of Xenophon and Plato was a fear of being supposed to lean to my own views if I attempted new translations of my authors.

fail of acceptance in that he was poor; but giving according to his ability, he doubted not, but, in the sight of the gods, he equalled those men whose gifts and sacrifices overspread the whole altar. For Socrates always reckoned upon it as a most indubitable truth, that the service paid the Deity by the pure and pious soul was the most grateful service.

"When he prayed his petition was only this,—that the gods would give to him those things that were good. And this he did, forasmuch as they alone knew what was good for man. But he who should ask for gold or silver, or increase of dominion, acted not, in his opinion, more wisely than one who should pray for the opportunity to fight, or game, or anything of the like nature; the consequence whereof being altogether doubtful, might turn, for aught he knew, not a little to his disadvantage."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 3.

It was more difficult for the philosopher either innocently to comply with, or safely to oppose that part of the popular religion which related to oracles and omens. Socrates appears to have done what was possible, and what therefore was best, towards ultimately correcting this great evil.

"He likewise asserted, that the science of divination was necessary for all such as would govern, successfully, either cities or private families; for although he thought every one might choose his own way of life, and afterwards, by his industry, excel therein, (whether architecture, mechanics, agriculture, superintending the labourer, managing the finances, or practising the art of war,) yet even here, the gods, he would say, thought proper to reserve to themselves, in all these things, the knowledge of that part of them which was of the most importance, since he who was the most careful to cultivate his field, could not know, of a certainty, who should reap the fruit of it.

"Socrates, therefore, esteemed all those as no other than madmen, who, excluding the Deity, referred the success of their designs to nothing higher than human prudence. He

likewise thought those not much better who had recourse to divination on every occasion, as if a man was to consult the oracle whether he should give the reins of his chariot into the hands of one ignorant or well versed in the art of driving, or place at the helm of his ship a skilful or unskilful pilot.

"He also thought it a kind of impiety to importune the gods with our inquiries concerning things of which we may gain the knowledge by number, weight, or measure; it being, as it seemed to him, incumbent on man to make himself acquainted with whatever the gods had placed within his power: as for such things as were beyond his comprehension, for these he ought always to apply to the oracle; the gods being ever ready to communicate knowledge to those whose care had been to render them propitious."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 1.

When we recollect the sagacity of those who directed the oracles, we shall understand the prudence of consulting them in such cases.

Respecting the system of belief, which we call the Heathen Mythology, the legislators of Greece had the wisdom and the charity not to require open and definite professions, but left every one free to interpret the letter of Homer in the spirit in which he could most conscientiously accept it, so long as he neither attacked the popular belief, nor divulged the solemn mysteries. Socrates not being called upon for a public declaration of opinion on these points, appears to have acted with a prudence which let no man call timidity; remembering that not his life only, but his usefulness depended on his discretion. Between the rites of his country, which might be made the outward signs of a pure piety, and the belief of his more superstitious countrymen, against which reason and conscience could not but protest, Socrates appears to have made a clear distinction, and to have acted reverently towards the Rites, and cautiously towards the Belief of his country.

"And first, with respect to sacred rites and institutions. In these things it was ever his practice to approve himself a strict observer of the answer the Pythian priestess gives to all who inquire the proper manner of sacrificing to the gods, or paying honours to deceased ancestors. 'Follow,' saith the god, 'the custom of your country:' and therefore Socrates, in all those exercises of his devotion and piety, confined himself altogether to what he saw practised by the republic; and to his friends he constantly advised the same thing, saying it only savoured of vanity and superstition in all those who did otherwise."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 3.

Such was the reverence with which Socrates regarded the Rites of his country; let us now consider the caution with which he spoke of her Belief. The *Memorabilia* supplies us with a passage, the full force of which may be gathered from an oft-quoted dictum in the *Phædrus* of Plato.

"It was frequent with him to say, between jest and earnest, that he doubted not its being with charms like these (temptations to intemperance) that Circe turned the companions of Ulysses into swine; while the hero himself, being admonished by Mercury, and from his accustomed temperance refusing to taste the enchanting cup, happily escaped the shameful transformation."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 3.

"But for my own part, Phædrus," (Socrates is speaking in the Dialogue of that name,) "I consider interpretations of this kind as pleasant enough, but at the same time, as the province of a man vehemently curious and laborious, and not entirely happy; and this for no other reason than because, after such an explanation, it is necessary for him to correct the shape of the Centaurs and Chimæra. And, besides this, a crowd of Gorgons and Pegasuses will pour upon him for an exposition of this kind, and of certain other prodigious natures, immense both in multitude and novelty; all of which, if any one, not believing in their

literal meaning, should draw to a probable sense, employing for this purpose a certain rustic wisdom, he will stand in need of a most abundant leisure. With respect to myself, indeed, I have not leisure for such an undertaking; and this because I am not yet able, according to the Delphic precept, to know myself. But it appears to me to be ridiculous, while I am yet ignorant of this, to speculate on things foreign from the knowledge of myself. Hence, bidding farewell to these, and being persuaded in the opinion I have just now mentioned respecting them, I do not contemplate these but myself, considering whether I am not a wild beast, possessing more folds than Typhon, and far more raging and fierce, or whether I am a more mild and simple animal, naturally participating of a certain divine and modest condition."—PLATO's *Phœdrus:* TAYLOR's *Translation.*

If it was dangerous at all times to meddle with such questions in an inquiring spirit, it was hopeless at that time to attempt any canon of criticism on which all might agree, and by which truth might be attained. The first would have ended in banishment or death; the other would have led to endless disputations. Yet it cannot be doubted that Socrates was aware that a philosopher had to reform, as well as to comply with, both the creed and the rites of his country, if he desired to promote the religious, moral, and political welfare of his countrymen. For whether Socrates did or did not give public utterance to the bold opinions on these subjects which Plato puts into his mouth, both in the seventh book of the *Republic*, and in the convincing and amusing dialogue entitled *Euthyphron*, it is obvious that all the remarks there made, on the demoralising tendencies and manifest absurdities of the superstitions of Greece, are true to the very letter, and must have been well known to Socrates. Indeed, had Socrates done nothing more than conform to the rites and submit to the creed of his country, we should have felt little respect for the purity of his

piety or for the soundness of his religion. But we have already seen the wholesome restrictions and limitations he attempted to introduce respecting sacrifice, divination, and prayer; and the passage in Plato's *Phædrus*, taken in connection with incidental remarks in the *Memorabilia*, is sufficiently intelligible respecting his real estimate of the mythological fables of Greece. But waving such discussions, as at that time more dangerous than profitable, (Plato, we shall find, afterwards entered boldly upon this discussion, and that not in the best spirit, either of doubting or of believing, and put both his scepticisms and his mysticisms into the mouth of Socrates,) the Socrates of Xenophon is described as labouring most earnestly and conscientiously to establish principles of religious belief, untainted either by superstition or scepticism, which might become rallying points for the reformation of religion, not in Greece only, nor in those times alone, but throughout the whole world to the end of all time.

Let us first examine his opinions on the great question which separates Atheism from Theism, Materialism from Religion; and let us then ask, is this the philosopher accused by Aristophanes of superseding primitive piety by atheistic speculations*, and introducing a physical vortex in the place of an intelligent Creator? Happily we have so clear an account, not only of Socrates' later opinions, but of his earlier speculations on this great question, that we can repel at once the accusations of Aristophanes and the hints and hesitations of Mr. Mitchell.

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* Mr. Mitchell tells us (p. 93), that Aristophanes' "imputing atheistical opinions, or contempt for the religious rites of his country," to Socrates, was "unquestionably one of the heaviest blows the poet has dealt him;" because "how far it was deserved must now be a matter of uncertainty." This is discharging the duty of an editor to his author most unscrupulously.

As the dialogue with Aristodemus is one of the most precious remains of antiquity, whether we consider the importance of the subject-matter, the admirable manner of treating it, or the authority of the teacher, we are unwilling to detract from its full effect by the least curtailment. If the reader will compare the argument with the celebrated opening chapter of Paley's *Natural Theology*, he will see how solid and broad a foundation Socrates supplied to the Christian teacher. He will also see what little fairness is shown by the clever author of the *Deontology*, when he speaks upon this subject.

"Two things," says Dr. Bowring, "are there (viz. as component parts of the *summum bonum*), two separate things, and these separate things are synonymous with 'the idea of good,' the sight of God and the enjoyment of God. The God of Christianity, the God of the Bible—this cannot be, for he is not to be seen—he is invisible. What can, indeed, be meant by the God of the Platonists and Academics? which of their gods, as they were all heathens and had gods by thousands—which of them did they ever enjoy?"—*Deontology*, vol. i., p. 43.

As the god of Plato was the god of Socrates, and as Dr. Bowring has confounded Socrates and Plato together, "as talking nonsense under pretence of teaching wisdom," we will show him, in the very words of Socrates, what was meant.

"I will now relate the manner in which I once heard Socrates discoursing with Aristodemus, surnamed *The Little*, concerning the Deity. For observing that he neither prayed nor sacrificed to the gods, but, on the contrary, ridiculed and laughed at those who did, he said to him,—

"'Tell me, Aristodemus, is there any man whom you admire on account of his merit?' Aristodemus having answered 'Many,'—'Name some of them, I pray you.' 'I admire,' said Aristodemus, 'Homer for his Epic poetry,

Melanippides for his dithyrambics, Sophocles for tragedy, Polycletes for statuary, and Xeuxis for painting.'

"'But which seems to you most worthy of admiration, Aristodemus; the artist who forms images void of motion and intelligence, or one who hath the skill to produce animals that are endued not only with activity but understanding?' 'The latter, there can be no doubt,' replied Aristodemus, 'provided the production was not the effect of chance, but of wisdom and contrivance.' 'But since there are many things, some of which we can easily see the use of, while we cannot say of others to what purpose they were produced, which of these, Aristodemus, do you suppose the work of wisdom?' 'It should seem the most reasonable to affirm it of those, whose fitness and utility are so evidently apparent.'

"'But it is evidently apparent that He who at the beginning made man, endued him with senses because they were good for him; eyes, wherewith to behold whatever was visible; and ears, to hear whatever was to be heard. For say, Aristodemus, to what purpose should odours be prepared, if the sense of smelling had been denied? or why the distinctions of bitter and sweet, of savoury and unsavoury, unless a palate had been likewise given, conveniently placed, to arbitrate between them and declare the difference? Is not that Providence, Aristodemus, in a most eminent manner conspicuous, which, because the eye of man is so delicate in its contexture, hath therefore prepared eyelids, like doors, whereby to secure it; which extend of themselves whenever it is needful, and again close when sleep approaches? Are not these eyelids provided, as it were, with a fence on the edge of them, to keep off the wind and guard the eye? Even the eyebrow itself is not without its office, but, as a penthouse, is prepared to turn off the sweat which, falling from the forehead, might enter and annoy that no less tender than astonishing part of us. Is it not to be admired that the ears should take in sounds of every sort, and yet are not too much filled by them? That the fore-teeth of the animal should be formed in such

a manner as is evidently best suited for the cutting of its food, as those on the side for grinding it to pieces? That the mouth, through which this food is conveyed, should be placed so near the nose and eyes as to prevent the passing unnoticed whatever is unfit for nourishment; while nature, on the contrary, hath set at a distance, and concealed from the senses, all that might disgust or any way offend them? And canst thou still doubt, Aristodemus, whether a disposition of parts like this should be the work of chance, or of wisdom and contrivance?' 'I have no longer any doubt,' replied Aristodemus; 'and, indeed, the more I consider it, the more evident it appears to me, that man must be the masterpiece of some great artificer; carrying along with it infinite marks of the love and favour of Him who hath thus formed it.'

'And what thinkest thou, Aristodemus, of that desire in the individual which leads to the continuance of the species? Of that tenderness and affection in the female towards her young, so necessary for its preservation? Of that unremitted love of life, and dread of dissolution, which take such strong possession of us from the moment we begin to be?' 'I think of them,' answered Aristodemus, 'as so many regular operations of the same great and wise Artist, deliberately determining to preserve what he hath made.'

"'But, farther (unless thou desirest to ask me questions), seeing, Aristodemus, thou thyself art conscious of reason and intelligence, supposest thou there is no intelligence elsewhere? Thou knowest thy body to be a small part of that wide extended earth, which thou everywhere beholdest: the moisture contained in it, thou also knowest to be a small portion of that mighty mass of waters, whereof seas themselves are but a part, while the rest of the elements contribute out of their abundance to thy formation. It is the soul then alone, that intellectual part of us, which is come to thee by some lucky chance, from I know not where. If so be there is, indeed, no intelligence elsewhere: and we must be forced to confess, that this stupendous universe, with all the various bodies contained

therein—equally amazing, whether we consider their magnitude or number, whatever their use, whatever their order,—all have been produced, not by intelligence, but by chance!' 'It is with difficulty that I can suppose otherwise,' returned Aristodemus, 'for I behold none of those gods whom you speak of as making and governing all things; whereas I see the artists when at their work here among us.' 'Neither yet seest thou thy soul, Aristodemus, which, however, most assuredly governs thy body; although it may well seem, by thy manner of talking, that it is chance, and not reason, which governs thee.'

"'I do not despise the gods,' said Aristodemus; 'on the contrary, I conceive so highly of their excellence, as to suppose they stand in no need either of me or of my services.' 'Thou mistakest the matter, Aristodemus; the greater magnificence they have shown in their care of thee, so much the more honour and service thou owest them.' 'Be assured,' said Aristodemus, 'if I once could be persuaded the gods take care of man, I should want no monitor to remind me of my duty.' 'And canst thou doubt, Aristodemus, if the gods take care of man? Hath not the glorious privilege of walking upright been alone bestowed on him, whereby he may, with the better advantage, survey what is around him, contemplate with more ease those splendid objects which are above, and avoid the numerous ills and inconveniences which would otherwise befall him? Other animals, indeed, they have provided with feet, by which they may remove from one place to another; but to man they have also given hands, with which he can form many things for his use, and make himself happier than creatures of any other kind. A tongue hath been bestowed on every other animal; but what animal, except man, hath the power of forming words with it, whereby to explain his thoughts, and make them intelligible to others.

" 'But it is not with respect to the body alone that the gods have shown themselves thus bountiful to man. Their most excellent gift is that soul they have infused into him, which so far surpasses what is elsewhere to be found. For

by what animal, except man, is even the existence of those gods discovered, who have produced and still uphold, in such regular order, this beautiful and stupendous frame of the universe? What other species of creature is to be found that can serve, that can adore them? What other animal is able, like man, to provide against the assaults of heat and cold, of thirst and hunger? That can lay up remedies for the time of sickness, and improve the strength nature has given by a well-proportioned exercise? That can receive like him information or instruction; or so happily keep in memory what he hath seen, and heard, and learnt? These things being so, who seeth not that man is, as it were, a god in the midst of this visible creation? so far doth he surpass, whether in the endowments of soul or body, all animals whatsoever that have been produced therein. For if the body of the ox had been joined to the mind of man, the acuteness of the latter would have stood him in small stead, while unable to execute the well-designed plan; nor would the human form have been of more use to the brute, so long as it remained destitute of understanding! But in thee, Aristodemus, hath been joined to a wonderful soul a body no less wonderful; and sayest thou, after this, The gods take no thought for me? What wouldst thou then more to convince thee of their care?

"'I would they should send and inform me,' said Aristodemus, 'what things I ought or ought not to do, in like manner as thou sayest they frequently do to thee.' 'And what then, Aristodemus? supposest thou, that when the gods give out some oracle to all the Athenians, they mean it not for thee? If by their prodigies they declare aloud to all Greece—to all mankind—the things which shall befall them, are they dumb to thee alone? And art thou the only person whom they have placed beyond their care? Believest thou they would have wrought into the mind of a man a persuasion of their being able to make him happy or miserable, if so be they had no such power? or would not even man himself, long ere this, have seen through the gross delusion? How is it, Aristodemus, thou rememberest or remarkest

not, that the kingdoms and commonwealths most renowned as well for their wisdom as antiquity, are those whose piety and devotion hath been the most observable? and that even man himself is never so well disposed to serve the Deity as in that part of life when reason bears the greatest sway, and his judgment is supposed in its full strength and maturity? Consider, my Aristodemus, that the soul which resides in thy body can govern it at pleasure; why then may not the soul of the universe, which pervades and animates every part of it, govern it in like manner? If thine eye hath the power to take in many objects, and these placed at no small distance from it, marvel not if the eye of the Deity can at one glance comprehend the whole. And as thou perceivest it not beyond thy ability to extend thy care, at the same time, to the concerns of Athens, Egypt, Sicily, why thinkest thou, my Aristodemus, that the Providence of God may not easily extend itself through the whole universe?

" 'As therefore, among men, we make best trial of the affection and gratitude of our neighbour by showing him kindness, and discover his wisdom by consulting him in his distress, do thou in like manner behave towards the gods; and if thou wouldst experience what their wisdom and what their love, render thyself deserving the communication of some of those divine secrets which may not be penetrated by man, and are imparted to those alone who consult, who adore, who obey the Deity. Then shalt thou, my Aristodemus, understand there is a Being whose eye pierceth throughout all nature, and whose ear is open to every sound; extended to all places, extending through all time; and whose bounty and care can know no other bound than those fixed by his own creation.'

"By this discourse, and others of the like nature, Socrates taught his friends that they were not only to forbear whatever was impious, unjust, or unbecoming before man; but even, when alone, they ought to have a regard to all their actions, since the gods have their eyes continually upon us, and none of our designs can be concealed from them."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 4.

The arguments urged in this admirable dialogue are repeated with some variations in a dialogue* with Euthydemus; one portion of which is both more effective than that with Aristodemus, and more decidedly distinguishes the Deity from those ministering spirits, which the creed of his country compelled Socrates to speak of in the terms he did.

"Even among all those deities who so liberally bestow on us good things, not one of them maketh himself an object of our sight. And He who raised this whole universe, and still upholds the mighty frame, who perfected every part of it in beauty and in goodness, suffering none of these parts to decay through age, but renewing them daily with unfading vigour, whereby they are able to execute whatever he ordains with that readiness and precision which surpass man's imagination; even he, the supreme God, who performeth all these wonders, still holds himself invisible, and it is only in his works that we are capable of admiring him. For consider, my Euthydemus, the sun which seemeth, as it were, set forth to the view of all men, yet suffereth not itself to be too curiously examined; punishing those with blindness who too rashly venture so to do; and those ministers of the gods, whom they employ to execute their bidding, remain to us invisible; for though the thunderbolt is shot from on high, and breaketh in pieces whatever it findeth in its way, yet no one seeth it when it falls, when it strikes, or when it retires; neither are the winds discoverable to our sight, though we plainly behold the ravages they everywhere make, and with ease perceive what time they are rising. And if there be anything in man, my Euthydemus, partaking of the divine nature, it must surely be the soul which governs and directs him; yet no one considers this as an object of his sight. Learn, therefore, not to despise those things which you cannot see; judge of the greatness of the power by the

* Book iv. chap. 3.

effects which are produced, and reverence the Deity."—*Memorabilia*, book iv. chap. 3.

The last dialogue we have quoted commences with these remarkable and characteristic words:

"Yet was not Socrates ever in haste to make orators, artists or able statesmen. The first business, as he thought, was to implant in the minds of his followers virtuous principles (since, these wanting, every other talent only added to the capacity of doing greater harm), and more especially to inspire them with piety towards the gods."

No one could have witnessed greater or more mischievous perversions of what Dr. Bowring calls "the religious sanction" than Socrates; but he did not infer from those perversions that *abusus tollit usum*, nor has he consented to put "the moral sanction" (as Dr. Bowring defines it; it should be called "the popular sanction") in the place of religion. But we shall return to this subject presently. In the meantime, Dr. Bowring's questions, "what can, indeed, be meant by the God of the Platonists?"—"was he one of the thousand gods of the heathens?"—"was he supposed to be visible?" have been answered; and it has been shown that Socrates was not employed with Plato "in talking nonsense under pretence of teaching wisdom," nor in "the denial of matters known to every man's experience, and the assertion of other matters opposed to every man's experience." On the contrary, the voice of Socrates is in this instance that *vox populi*, that universal voice of all mankind in all ages, which is indeed *vox Dei*. And never was the voice of the whole human race expressed in simpler or nobler accents.

We have next to show how Socrates had been led, by a sound reason and a clear conscience, working on the materials of mind and matter, to lay this solid foundation for principle and practice, to build up this

Doric temple, in all its simple grandeur, for the edification, not of Greece only, but of the whole world to the end of time. The passage in the *Phædon* of Plato, which gives an account of Socrates' earlier speculations is too long to be quoted, and will be understood better by analysis than translation.

Socrates in the *Phædon* is made to say of himself, that being dissatisfied with the prevalent opinions about generation and dissolution, and not being able to invent a more satisfactory system of causation for himself, and having, under these circumstances, heard that Anaxagoras had set forth Intellect as the cause of all things, he was delighted with this hypothesis; conceiving that it implied that all things are arranged in the best way of which they are capable, and so that the object of inquiry is, to find out what is the best way, (therein implying a knowledge of the worst way,) and that this knowledge constitutes science. But, he continues, I was disappointed on finding that Anaxagoras did not employ himself on these better reasons for each phænomenon, but, like others, was hunting after the *immediate* physical cause, referring all things to that as if it were *the ultimate* cause; for example, he would attempt to account for my sitting here biding my fate, by referring it to the physical causation of the mutual action of bones and muscles, etc., not by referring to an intellectual causation, viz. the opinion of the Athenians about law, and my (Socrates) opinion about justice. I, on the other hand, continues Socrates, am quite ready to admit the agency of *secondary*, or physical causation, as a *means* of effecting; but contend that we must ultimately refer everything to *primary*, or intellectual causation, as the causation which employs those means for its own ends. I could not, for example, acquiesce in a theory, either of revolving motion or of balanced rest, as a *sufficient* account for the phænomena of the world; but con-

tended that there is a Divine Power which has arranged things according to what is good and fitting, and so keeps them bound and held together. Of this power men think but little, but of this power I would willingly hear*.—See *Phædon*, section 106.

Here we get upon the verge of Plato's celebrated hypothesis, which would require too much space and time to enter upon at present. But, comparing the above passage from the *Phædon*, with other passages from the *Memorabilia*, we infer (what from the whole tone of his mind we should *à priori* have supposed) that Socrates had always been opposed to that atheistic or material philosophy with which the natural philosophy, or to speak more correctly, the cosmogony of Greece was too much identified. Under these circumstances he had desisted altogether from physics, and had turned to morals; or, as it is expressed in the *Memorabilia*,—

"Neither did he amuse himself, like others, with making curious researches into the works of nature, and finding out how this, which sophists call the world, had its beginning; but, as for himself, man, and what related to man, were the only subjects on which he chose to employ himself. To this purpose, all his inquiries and conversation turned upon what was pious, what impious; what honourable, what base; what just, what unjust; what wisdom, what folly." —*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 1.

It was because the physics of the day were merely speculative, and too commonly atheistic, (being neither practically available nor theoretically sound,) that Socrates turned from the schools of physical speculation to that of moral observation; thereby preparing the

* This passage was printed in the *British and Foreign Quarterly*, (in which this essay first appeared,) between inverted commas, as if it had been a quotation. It is, in fact, taken from an analysis I have made of Plato's principal works; parts of which, (should this little volume meet with a favourable reception,) may be offered to the public.

way for a philosophy of facts, in physics as well as in ethics. For it was impossible that a philosophy of facts should be established in morals, without sooner or later causing the downfall of unreal physics. This important evidence respecting the philosophical claims of Socrates ought to be more insisted on than it has been.

We will quote a few passages from the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, which prove that the practical piety of Socrates was in accordance with his sound speculative theology.

"He was persuaded the gods watched over the actions and affairs of men in a way altogether different from what the vulgar imagined; for while these limited their knowledge to some particulars only, Socrates, on the contrary, extended it to all; firmly persuaded, that every word, every action, nay, even our most retired deliberations, were open to their view; that they were everywhere present, and communicated to mankind all such knowledge as related to the conduct of human life."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 2.

"Farther, when he supposed any intimations had been given him by the Deity concerning what ought or ought not to be done, it was no more possible to bring Socrates to act otherwise, than to make him quit the guide, clear-sighted and well-instructed in the road he was to go, in favour of one not only ignorant but blind. And to this purpose he always condemned the extreme folly of those, who, to avoid the ill opinion and reproach of men, acted not according to the direction of the gods."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 3.

"'Have you never heard,' continued Socrates, 'of certain laws that are not written?' 'You mean such as are in force everywhere?' 'True. Did all mankind concur in making them?' 'Impossible; since all mankind could not assemble in one place, neither would all have spoken the same language.' 'Whence, then, do you suppose we had them?' 'From the gods, I should imagine; for the first command everywhere is, to adore the gods.' 'Assuredly these things

are of the gods; for when I consider every breach of these laws as carrying along with it the punishment of the transgressor, I cannot but allow them to proceed from a more excellent legislator than is to be found among the sons of men.'"—*Ibid.*, book iv. chap. 4.

"He in whom nothing was ever observed unbecoming that reverence so justly due to the gods; but, on the contrary, so behaved towards them, both in regard to his words and his actions, that whoever shall hereafter demean himself in such a manner, must be, in fact, and ought to be esteemed, a man of the truest and most exemplary piety."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 1.

Let the religion of Socrates, as exhibited in the above unquestionable evidence respecting his earlier studies, his later opinions, and the deep and broad characteristics of that moral and intellectual nature which must have led to such sound studies in earlier, and such settled principles in later life, be compared with the sceptic and sophistic mystagogue, whom Aristophanes has so cleverly painted, and then let any one say what excuse can be made for the man of wit*. It is thus that he speaks of Socrates and his school:—

STREPSIADES.

"Blasphemers! why did you insult the Gods?
Dash, drive, demolish them! Their crimes are many;
But their contemptuous treatment of the gods,
Their impious blasphemies, exceed them all."—
MITCHELL'S *Translation of the Clouds*, Scene viii.

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* See the whole of the second act of the *Clouds*, and the conclusion of the last act. Whatever was the object of the *Clouds*, its general tendency is to confound Socrates with Diagoras for impiety, and with the sophists for trickery. On the other hand, Aristophanes plays the champion

"Of manners primitive, and that good old time,
Which I have seen, when discipline prevail'd—
* * * they were taught
A loftier key, whether to chant the name
Of Pallas—" *Scene* iv.

Now all this, on the part of Aristophanes, is the very sophistry which he

STREPSIADES.

"Insufferable blockhead that I was!
What ail'd me thus to court this Socrates
Ev'n to the exclusion of the immortal gods?
O Mercury, forgive me; be not angry,
Dear tutelary god, but spare me still."—*Ibid.*

Let it be remembered that this Mercury was the god of rogues and bargain-makers, and that the worship for which the comedian is so zealous, is happily described by himself in another part of this very play:—

"The deities, who find themselves
Bilk'd of their dues, and supperless for lack
Of their accustomed sacrifices, rail
At her, poor Moon, and vent their hungry spite."—
Ibid. Scene ii.

It is for such deities and such a worship that Aristophanes is zealous even to slaying; and it was for such impiety, or rather by such accusations, that Socrates was at last persecuted to the death,—and it is to varnish the man of wit at the expense of the philosopher, that Mr. Mitchell has employed his good scholarship and his clever pen. But what excuse can be made for the man of wit? Facts?—they are all against him. Misconception and mistake?—it was not possible. Over-suspicious dread of impiety?—a hypocritical pretence. An anxious desire to restore primitive discipline?—absurd in the method proposed, and ridiculous in the person proposing it. How then do we account for the attacks upon Socrates contained in the *Clouds?* Simply, that Aristophanes wanted a butt for his satire, and that the face, person, and habits of Socrates, his custom of free discussion, bold opposi-

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attacks; for it is to pretend to teach others that of which he himself has no belief. Bad for me, but good for you! Do you take it really, and I will pretend to take it. Such was the reasoning.

tion, and honest exposure of empty pretences, pointed him out to the reckless wit. We have small respect for a dislike of irreligion and sophistry which caused Aristophanes to identify their most conscientious and successful opponent with Atheists and Sophists. Whether there was malice we pretend not to decide; but we think little is gained in a moral point of view by proving it to have been a case of pure unprovoked mischief. As to the parties having lived on fair terms afterwards, and that Plato thought and spoke highly of the ability and taste of Aristophanes, and that he did not take vengeance on him for his base attack upon Socrates, even if all this were much more true than it is (begging Schleiermacher's and Mr. Mitchell's pardon for altogether differing from them on this point), surely it would establish, not the innocence of the comedian, but the wisdom and goodness of the philosopher. The whole defence of Aristophanes is, indeed, more worthy of a sophistical advocate or flattering panegyrist than of a sound and learned critic. Of the sense and humour with which Aristophanes assailed the sophists and rhetoricians, probably with as much party spirit as sound judgment, there can be but one opinion. There must have been great defects in the motives and character of the satirist, which deprived his satire of half its force, and caused it to do as much harm as good to the cause he so cleverly supported.

We feel great obligation to Mr. Mitchell for the tone which his writings have given to English scholarship, leading it from verbal questions to the realities of literature, morals, and history. But we cannot think that the *ecclesiastical spirit* with which he acknowledges (see *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 129) that he sat down to examine the character and philosophy of Socrates, was favourable to sincerity, truth, and justice. Nor do we think that the *political bias* which makes him attribute so much of Xenophon's moral worth to his

early intimacy with Cyrus, and to "the knowledge thereby acquired of the sentiments of chivalry and honour inherent in monarchies," (see p. 154,) much mends the matter. He may indeed, be right in attributing the death of Socrates to the base prejudices and passions of a demoralized people (see p. 150); but then, who helped to demoralize the people of Athens? We cannot admit that the *Euthyphron* of Plato "refutes and removes opinions quite sufficient for the good conduct of ordinary life," (see p. 126,) nor that Aristophanes was the man, nor that he took the right way, to restore the Homeric belief and discipline. We smile at the statement that "we owe to the ridicule of this comedy the philosopher, whose name (with certain deductions) no man mentions without feeling himself exalted for a time" (see p. 139); we laugh at the absurd idea of the *Clouds* of Aristophanes having taught religion and morals to Socrates; and we regret the insinuation of "certain deductions" (see p. 90 to 102) from the character and philosophy of Socrates, which this wild hypothesis, together with *that* ecclesiastical spirit and *that* political bias, required the editor of Aristophanes to elaborate. That Socrates could afford to treat with contempt an unsuccessful play, for the people of Athens had the sense and feeling to damn the *Clouds* of Aristophanes,—(not for its serious tone,—for it is a most brilliant farce; not from ignorance of who this Socrates was, for that hypothesis Mr. Mitchell himself disproves, but because there was some virtue yet left in them) we can well believe; indeed it was wise in Socrates to take it in that manner. But the plain fact is, that the *Clouds* of Aristophanes charges Socrates directly with teaching irreligion, trickery, and sophistry; and it is a most editor-like hypothesis to believe that Aristophanes was conscientiously earnest in his wish to expose the Sophists, and that he innocently employed Socrates as

a vehicle for his satire*. The persevering enmity with which he followed up Euripides, and the contempt in which Plato held and exhibited his moral character, (see the *Banquet* of Plato,) are, together with Socrates' contemptuous mention of the comedian in his *Defence*, a sufficient proof that the mischief intended and the wit displayed were the essence of the *Clouds*, whilst the virtuous indignation against the Sophists was, at best, matter of taste rather than principle. Happily time is an excellent scavenger; and we agree with Mr. Mitchell, "that the wit of the *Clouds* may be relished without diminishing any of the respect justly due to Socrates." But this enjoyment will be secured to us, not by frittering away the character and philosophy of Socrates, in order to make out a case for the comedian, but by acknowledging that the virtue of Socrates defies the wit and malice even of Aristophanes. What does Mr. Mitchell mean by saying, "if, as Ælian relates, Socrates stood up in the theatre to gratify the curiosity thus excited, it will be no uncharitable remark to impute it, partly, to his sense of the opportunity thus offered for gaining a name in society; an advantage, which, to a person of his pursuits in life, was of incalculable importance?" We think it a *very* uncharitable remark. And what does Mr. Mitchell mean by saying, "Upon whom the guilt rests (he is speaking of the hypothesis of a community of women, and the exposure of children), upon the teacher or the scholar (*i. e.* Socrates or Plato), it is not now possible to say." How is it, we beg to ask, that we hear nothing of this

* Mr. Mitchell has quoted Schlegel's *obiter dictum* to this effect in *italics* in his first note on his *Preliminary Discourse*. It is curious to see a theory grow out of "it is not improbable that," (for such is Schlegel's mode of propounding it,) into proof piled on proof. But Schlegel, after his estimate of Molière, cannot plead infallibility for his criticisms, though *in verba jurare magistri*, appears to be the excuse of many critics who have adopted his occasional defence of Aristophanes, and want of justice to Socrates.

abomination from Xenophon? Does Mr. Mitchell really believe that there are no theories of his own in Plato's *Republic*? What is more likely or more certain to be his own than the theory of a community of women, which he appears to have imported from that land of monstrous births, Egypt*? Indeed we are sick of defending Socrates from such attacks, and return once more to his pure piety and practical religion, which the attacks of Aristophanes have only rendered more conspicuous.

The plain and simple truth, which Mr. Mitchell's ecclesiastical and political bias, aided by his hypothesis, would hide from us, is that Socrates appeared at one of those great periods of the world's history, when religion, morality, and policy are shaken to their foundations, when the very grounds of truth and justice are rigorously examined for the purpose of discovering whether they rest only on the priest's fable and the legislator's dictum, or whether they have imperishable foundations in man's nature and God's will. It is at these crises in the world's history that the veil is drawn or torn aside, and according as principle or unprinciple, wisdom or folly prevail, the period is marked by national judgments or national blessings of no ordinary character. That such periods do recur in the great cycles of time, but with a constant progression towards purer principles and nobler ends, may be the foundation of that ancient mysticism, which held that the souls of the departed, after the purification of suffering, return to higher duties in the world:—

Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt—
Donec longa dies, perfecto temporis orbe,
Concretam exemit labem—

* See the *Timæus*, sect. 5, 6, 7.

Has omnes, ubi mille rotam volvere per annos,
Lethæum ad fluvium Deus evocat ordine magno,
Scilicet immemores supera ad convexa revisant.

Believing that the lessons of antiquity, whether shrouded in the mystic language of Pythagoras* and Plato, or expressed plainly in the common-sense and common-life language of Socrates and Xenophon, deserve neither to be rejected with scorn, nor to be received with blind submission, we are well content to borrow what appears to us the true commentary on the above important text from the wise and learned pages of a great and a good man:—

"We may learn also a more sensible division of history than that which is commonly adopted of ancient and modern. We shall see that there is in fact an ancient and a modern period in the history of every people; the ancient differing, and the modern in many essential points agreeing with that in which we now live. Thus the largest portion of that history which we commonly call ancient is practically modern, as it describes society in a stage analogous to that in which it now is; while, on the other hand, much of what is called modern history is practically ancient, as it relates to a state of things which has passed away. Thucydides and Xenophon, the orators of Athens, and the philosophers, speak a wisdom more applicable to us politically, than the wisdom of even our own countrymen, who lived in the middle ages; and their position, both intellectual and political, more nearly resembles our own†."

No lesson can be found in the historians, orators, and

* In his Greek edition of the *Clouds*, Mr. Mitchell has contrived to make Pythagoras a middle term between Socrates and mysticism! To be sure, he (Mr. Mitchell) speaks of Socrates in his earlier days, and gets at him through the well-known Pythagorism and mysticism of Plato. This is more ingenious than ingenuous. Socrates, with that matter-of-fact face of his, would have made a strange sort of a mystic. We are told that he had the front and bearing of a bull—bold, honest, and straightforward. Begging Mr. Mitchell's pardon, Socrates amongst mystics would have been, to use a vulgar expression, a bull in a china-shop.

† See ARNOLD's *Thucydides*, vol. i., Appendix 1. The English

philosophers of Athens, more applicable to our own period than what may be extracted from the Comedies of Aristophanes, if we will only read the text fairly. Then shall we understand, not that Socrates' early errors (his *assumed* mysticism and *pretended* scepticism) had provoked and warranted the attacks of the comedian, and that the merits of the philosopher are altogether attributable to that wholesome and timely castigation which he received from his severe but friendly monitor,—not that the sound-minded comedian succeeded, where the philosopher had failed, in discovering the true remedy for the religious and moral, the political and intellectual evils of his times, and that we must resort to the pages of Aristophanes for lessons on religion and morality, politics and education,—to no such estimate of the comedian and the philosopher will the clever and entertaining writings of Mr. Mitchell persuade us, unless we are content to sacrifice truth and justice, a sound understanding of the past, a sound application of the lesson to the present, and all sound hopes for the future. It is this that we shall understand from the pages of Aristophanes, which Mr. Mitchell has so agreeably laid open to the English reader, to wit, that foremost amongst the fearful dangers of the times of Aristophanes was the spirit of insincere profession, reckless scepticism, and fierce bigotry, of all which he has exhibited perfect specimens in the very work in which he attacks Socrates; whilst, on the other hand, the sincerest piety, the heartiest benevolence, and the deepest convictions of truth are the great characteristics of the philosophy he attacks. And we contend further, that it is in the

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reader will be well repaid by reading a few pages, written in the very spirit of Thucydides—*crebrior sententiis quam verbis*.

As the notes to Mr. Mitchell's edition of the *Clouds* are in English, the English reader may consult them without being alarmed at the Greek text.

philosophy of Socrates that we must seek remedies, *mutatis mutandis*, for the dangers of insincerity, scepticism, and bigotry, in one word, of that anarchy, religious and political, intellectual and moral, of which the writings of Aristophanes pretend to be the censor, but are really the example.

Fearful was the period in which the wit, impiety, and profligacy of Aristophanes may be said, in the language of mysticism, to have returned to take a leading part in a drama of more extended interests. It matters little that what was insincere profession in Athens became open scepticism in France, that what had been oligarchic became democratical, and the enemy of Cleon became the herald of Danton. When motives and consequences are fairly considered, these are found to be superficial differences, especially when they are compared with the great characteristics, in which the men and their times, Aristophanes and Voltaire, were all but identified. Miserable periods! unhappy people! given up to fierce and selfish contests between an innovation which respects nothing, and a bigotry which reverences everything. How unlike the philosophy of Socrates both in motive, in object, and in consequence! that *sound* philosophy, which mediating between the past, the present, and the future; between what we hope, what we have, and what we dread; in a word, between the actual and the ideal, the imperfect and the perfect,—is not more characterized by proving all things, (ever a work of danger,) than by a conscientious and reverential and pious determination to hold fast that which is good. It is from this sound philosophy and not from the principles or practices of the professing sceptic, that any sound lessons, religious, moral, or political, can be drawn. For amongst the unprincipled sceptics, sophists, and rhetoricians, whom Socrates and Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle, effectually exposed, there

was no false teacher more dangerous than the insincere professor, whose affected zeal will not separate what is true from what is false, what is good from what is evil, but clings with a fierce obstinacy to that which is unsound, and by so doing brings that which is sound into undeserved discredit. Such was not the philosophy of Socrates which Aristophanes so attacks, and Mr. Mitchell so defends;—the chattering philosopher, of whom Bacon and his reviewer, Bentham and his editor, speak so slightingly;—the blinded heathen philosopher, whom we have often heard sneered at by well-meaning religionists;—the philosopher, of whom, the Aristotelians of Oxford and the Dramatists of Cambridge say too little. It is not more our interest than it is our inclination to avoid offence—but we say deliberately, that the philosophy and character of Socrates have not been brought to bear sufficiently on the evils of the present times.

We will now proceed to consider whether the Morals Socrates taught were worthy of the foundations on which he rested them; or whether, as we have been told, there were indeed fair leaves and blossoms, but little or no fruit.

To doubt the morality of Socrates is as unjust as to doubt his piety; and Xenophon brings this question at once to a clear issue by referring to his bold and keen censure of the profligacy of Critias, and to the happy influence he exercised on the earlier years of Alcibiades. It was indeed impossible that any lessons of virtue could long resist the wild passions, fierce temptations, and unprincipled levity of the young and wealthy patrician, urged on by a base populace and baser parasites. It is not possible to resist the earthquake and the deluge; nor was Socrates answerable for the vices and crimes of Alcibiades. The wonder is that he ever acquired over this person the beneficial influence he at one time exercised, not that he found it

impossible to retain it, when innumerable temptations assailed the passions of his wild youth and dark manhood.

Turning to the morality of Socrates, what a noble temperance, free from all asceticism and pride, fanaticism and vanity, was the temperance of Socrates! On this point Xenophon is an unquestionable authority, as well able to exhibit a clear and full conception of the temperance of Socrates, as to follow with firm and steady tread in his master's steps. For well did Socrates know, and well also could he practise, and well could he teach, that temperance, continence, or self-command, the command over our rebellious passions, is as surely the corner-stone of all good practice, as religion, piety, or reverence for God, is the corner-stone of all sound principle. Well did Socrates teach his followers that self-command is the virtue to be learnt the first, and to be practised to the last; that it is the foundation of the other virtues, and the bond that holds them all together, for that without self-command, virtue can neither become nor be, neither begin nor continue.

"Hence, therefore," says Socrates, "we may see how necessary it is to make temperance our chief study, since without this, as its basis, what other virtue can we attain? How can we learn what is profitable, or practise what is praiseworthy? Neither can we conceive a state more pitiable, whether in respect to body or mind, than that of the voluptuary given up to all the drudgery of intemperance." —*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 5.

"I am persuaded that no virtue can subsist that is not diligently and duly exercised, and temperance more especially; because our sensual desires, being seated with our minds in the same body, are continually soliciting us to a compliance with the appetites which Nature hath implanted, though at the expense of virtue and all things virtuous."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 2.

"Such was his moderation, that I question whether there

ever was any man, if able to work at all, but might have earned sufficient to have supported Socrates. His custom was to eat as long as it gave him pleasure; and a good appetite was to him what delicious fare is to another: and as he only drank when thirst compelled him, whatever served to allay it could not fail of being grateful. So that it was easy for him when present at their feasts to refrain from excess, which other men find so much difficulty in doing. And as to such persons as gave proof how very little they could command themselves, to these he would counsel even the not tasting of those delicacies which might allure them to eat when they were not hungry."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 3.

"It should seem your opinion, Antipho, that happiness consisted in luxury and profusion: whereas, in truth, I consider it a perfection in the gods that they want nothing; and consequently he cometh nearest to the divine nature who standeth in want of the fewest things."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 6.

"Nor do my votaries (says Virtue, in Socrates' version of the Choice of Hercules) ever fail to find pleasure in their repasts, though small cost is wanted to furnish out their table; for hunger, not art, prepares it for them; while their sleep, which follows the labour of the day, is far more sweet than whatever expense can procure for idleness; yet sweet as it is, they quit it unreluctantly when called by their duty. The young enjoy the applause of the aged, the aged are reverenced by the young. Equally delighted with reflecting on the past, or contemplating the present, their attachment to me renders them favoured of the gods, dear to their friends, and honoured by their country."—*Ibid.*, book ii. chap. 1.

"Furthermore," continued Socrates, "it is this virtue alone which places both the body and the mind in their utmost degree of perfection; qualifying the man for the study, the knowledge, and the practice of his duty."—*Ibid.*, book iv. chap. 5.

"The consciousness of being thus employed (in his duty) must yield perpetual complacency and satisfaction; but it is

complacency and satisfaction, which belongeth not to the voluptuous; indeed, whom do we find at a greater distance from these, than the man whose every faculty is so entirely engaged in the pursuit of present pleasure as to leave no liberty for the performance of what is commendable?"—*Ibid.*

"It is the temperate alone who are able to inquire into the nature of things, and find out their difference; and carefully consulting both reason and experience can select what is good, reject what is evil, and become by that means both wise and happy."—*Ibid.*

"With regard to love, his counsel always was to keep at a distance from beautiful persons, saying it was difficult to approach any such and not be ensnared. As for himself, his great continence was known to every one, and it was more easy for him to avoid the most beautiful objects, than for others those who were the most disgusting."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 3.

"When he succeeded not in his private remonstrances, Critias still persisting in his unwarrantable designs, Socrates, it is said, reproached him in the presence of many, resembling him to a swine, the most filthy and disgusting of all animals. For this cause Critias hated him ever after."—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 2.

"Could he be a corrupter of youth, whose only employment was to root out of the mind of man every vicious inclination, and plant in their stead a love of that virtue which is so amiable in itself, and so becoming us as men, and which alone hath the power to make, whether cities or private families, flourishing and happy?"—*Ibid.*

"When death draweth nigh, and no thought remaineth but for the welfare of your children, do you then inquire for the debauched unto whom to intrust them? Is it he who must direct the virtuous education of your sons, and guard the chastity of your daughters, or secure to them their inheritance from the hand of the oppressor? Do you ever intrust your flocks or your herds to the conduct of him who is overcharged with drunkenness? or expect from such an one despatch to your affairs?"—*Ibid.*, book i. chap. 5.

Did this preacher of continence, temperance, or self-command, as the very corner-stone of all sound practice, appear in a primitive age of spare diet, and so become merely a recorder of the austere virtues of his time?—Not so. We need only name Pericles and Aspasia, Alcibiades, Aristophanes and Aristippus; and refer our readers to Plato's splendid dialogue the *Banquet**, in order to recall ideas of Asiatic luxury, vice, and crime. If Europe owes a debt of gratitude to Pausanias and Themistocles for having defended her institutions from a deluge of Asiatic tyranny, it is just as certainly to Socrates and his followers that Europe is indebted for defending her morals against Eastern vice,—*fædum inceptu, fædum exitu.* It was an ever-memorable contest which Socrates commenced, and which his pupils carried on, with the darkest vice and the lowest debasement. The very gods of Greece were in league against them, and Jupiter with his Ganymede led the van. The fearful picture which St. Paul draws of the vices of Rome at a later period was then realised in Greece; but with a wild wit, and an intoxicating beauty, which Rome could only attempt to imitate. No one conversant with the comedies of Aristophanes will accuse us of exaggerating the picture of Athenian profligacy in order to amplify the claims of Socrates as a moral reformer. Nor does it require serious argument to prove that earnest principle, not reckless humour, was needed for such a service. Even the folly of our own times has stopped short of making *a comedy* of "The Reformed Housebreaker," and has

* Putting together Socrates' sharp censure of Critias, which, had it been possible, would certainly have provoked a retort (*Memorabilia*, b. i. c. 2), and the strange account of himself, which Plato puts into the mouth of Alcibiades, which, had there been no foundation for it, would not have been ventured (see the *Banquet* of Plato), adding also to these many other of the like kind, and the passages in which Socrates is exhibited as an ἐραστὴς will require no other explanation than that which is given in the *Memorabilia*, book iv. chap. 1.

despaired of "putting the subject in so ridiculous a light, that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season." It has been left to Christian scholars to argue that a religious and moral purification could result to Athens from those passages of Aristophanes in which the mirth is fast and furious. Ridicule is the corrector of faulty manners, not of vicious morals, least of all of irreligion. Religious and moral principles must be adopted on deep and serious conviction, or they are neither religion nor morality. There is not a more insidious corruptor of individual or national character than "jesting which is not convenient." That this was the character in which Aristophanes appeared to Socrates the speech put into the mouth of Aristophanes in the *Banquet*, and the mention made of him in the *Apology*, plainly show. Turn we to the nobler dramas of Euripides, the friend and pupil of Socrates, the woman-hater, as he is represented by Aristophanes*, but, next to Homer, the champion of all that is lovely and noble in the female character,—the author of the *Bacchæ*, the *Ion* and the *Alcestis*—the only classic author who has conceived the passion of Love as at once intense and pure, and who can speak of the beauty of woman with the admiration and the delicacy of our own Shakspeare, of Milton, and of Scott. Let mothers, wives, and sisters bless the philosophy of Socrates and his school. If it be said that Socrates has not given us remarks on the duties of women, we answer—in the deep depravity and wild licentiousness of Greece, so nearly bordering on Asiatic vices, the philosopher had enough to do in building up manly virtue. But we cannot doubt that he moved Euripides to undertake

* "A most splenetic hatred of Euripides (says Mr. Mitchell), derived (he continues, *on the other tack*) from deeper views than people have generally given the comedian credit for." See *Preliminary Dissertation, p. 29.*

that important service, which he discharged so ably, so unsuccessfully, and with such danger to himself.

As the piety of Socrates was distinct from superstition, and his temperance from asceticism, they did not end in a monkish rule, but became the solid and firm foundations on which he built up a well-proportioned and beautiful edifice of domestic, social, and political usefulness. Indeed it is a most strange and unaccountable mistake in the reviewer of Bacon and the editor of Bentham, that they refuse to admit usefulness, private and public usefulness, to have been the very characteristic of the philosophy of Socrates; for, if it were not that he founded his usefulness on a higher and a nobler principle, but which in no way interferes with the matter-of-fact utility of every duty he enjoins, we should have said that usefulness, real downright every-day usefulness, is the most striking and all-pervading characteristic of Socrates' philosophy. The reviewer of Bacon has some strong remarks on the abstract and unpractical view which Plato has taken of the sciences, for example of figure and number*; but if these remarks were sounder than they are, even as applied to the philosophy of Plato, it requires only a quotation from the *Memorabilia* to show that they are not merely inapplicable to the philosophy of Socrates, but that the very opposite of the fault imputed (the opposite virtue, not the opposite fault), is one of the most striking characteristics of the philosophy of Socrates.

"Socrates also recommended the study of arithmetic to his friends, and assisted them, as was his custom, in tracing out the several parts of it, as far as might be useful; but here, as elsewhere, fixed bounds to their inquiries, never suffering them to run out into vain and trifling disquisitions

* See the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 132, p. 74.

which could be of no advantage either to themselves or others."—*Memorabilia*, book iv. chap. 7.

We have already seen temperance insisted on for its usefulness, and for no ascetic, fanatic, or stoic reasons. And it is in the same spirit that Socrates proceeds to develope the theory and practice of usefulness, on its true principles and in its right order. Beginning with the connection, yet insisting on the clear distinction, of usefulness and duty, he proceeds to point out what usefulness is, and what duty requires, in the case of parent and child (b. ii. c. 2); brothers and sisters (b. ii. c. 3); friend and friend (b. ii. c. 4, 5, 6). All these chapters contain admirable remarks. Then he proceeds to develope the usefulness and duty of a head of a family and its different members, under pressure of poverty (b. ii. c. 7); the usefulness and duty of the poor man to the rich man (b. ii. c. 8), and of the rich man to the poor man (b. ii. c. 9). Then he points out the usefulness and duty of a commander and his soldiers (b. iii. c. 1, 3, 5, 6, 7); of a statesman and the people (b. iii. c. 7). Each of these subjects is treated with a steady regard to usefulness and happiness, which might be characterized by terms exactly the reverse of those which Dr. Bowring has thought fit to use when speaking of the philosophy of Socrates.

"The summum bonum—the sovereign good—what is it? The Philosopher's stone, the balm Hygeian that cures all manner of diseases. It is this thing, and the other thing, it is any thing but pleasure—it is the Irishman's apple-pie made of nothing but quinces.

"While Xenophon was writing history, and Euclid giving instructions in geometry, Socrates and Plato were talking nonsense, under pretence of teaching wisdom. This morality of theirs consisted in words—this wisdom of theirs *was the denial of* matters known to every man's experience,

and the assertion of other matters opposed to every man's experience," etc. etc.

"While they were all of them chattering about the summum bonum, each was amusing himself with the gross enjoyments of sense," etc. etc.—BOWRING'S *Deontology*, vol. i. p. 40.

"A new ground is put forward *here* (*i. e.* in the *Deontology*). The ground of approbation will be the tendency of an act to increase happiness," etc. etc.—*Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 140.

In page 24 of the same work, Dr. Bowring says,—

"That *the public sanction* will, in as far as the subject is understood, be given to that line of conduct which most promotes the public happiness, is a corollary requiring no arguments for its establishment."

We will say a little on this subject when we examine the politics of Socrates; at present we will take leave to observe, that we are much more sure that *the divine sanction* is given to everything useful, than that the public sanction will be so given. We prefer to confine our attention to another matter, and not to enter at present on a consideration of the politics of Socrates; but we shall have much to say on that subject presently.

Our space reminds us that for the remainder of our article we must be content to use analysis and not quotation.

The attentive reader of the *Memorabilia* will not fail to remark, that the virtues which are treated *each by itself* in the second and third books, (as submission to authority and obedience to parents, love of brothers and love of friends, useful employment and preservation of property, etc., etc., all which virtues come under the head of private duty, and are treated of principally in the second book—and in like manner the several virtues, military and civil, which together constitute public duty, and are treated of principally

in the third book—all these separate virtues, private and public, being set forth as authorized by expediency or usefulness to man, and sanctioned by religion or duty to God,) are all summed up in the third book, under the one common title Justice. Nor will he fail to remark that this great comprehensive virtue, Justice, is placed in the fourth book of the *Memorabilia* immediately after Religion, whereas the separate virtues which together make up Justice are placed in the second book immediately after Self-command. The meaning of this change will be obvious to the intelligent reader of the *Memorabilia*. Self-command is placed in the second book at the head of all the separate virtues, because not one of them can exist without the practice of that instrumental virtue. Justice is placed in the fourth book immediately after Religion, in order to intimate that Justice is the practice of religion, and that Religion without justice is theory without practice, not wisdom but folly, not virtue but vice, not religion but hypocrisy. As we have seen Self-command distinguished clearly from asceticism, here we see religion distinguished as clearly from fanaticism. In the former case no value whatever was attached to corporeal mortifications; in the latter no worth is ascribed to spiritual ecstasies. In both the *mens sana in corpore sano* is the right view of this sound-minded philosopher.

It will also be observed that Socrates' definition of Justice proceeds *pari passu* with his definition of Religion, which adds another proof of the correctness of our estimate of his opinions on the greater of these two great questions. For Socrates commences by identifying Justice with Law, seeing that there is no hope of justice, but peril of anarchy, violence and wrong, if laws are not obeyed. Secondly, Socrates, identifies Human Law, in so far as it is *communis sensus hominum*, the general agreement of mankind

(not of the few nor yet of the many, not of the selfish nor yet of the violent, but the unanimous voice of all sound-minded men) with Divine law; so that what is useful, expedient and *just* manward, is holy, pious, and *religious* Godward. In agreement with the above view, it was the practice of Socrates, whilst he set an example of hearty and conscientious obedience to human laws, to use his utmost endeavours to correct and perfect them; using for this purpose all rational arguments and constitutional powers, in order that Human Law may be more and more identified with that usefulness which is in itself an expression of Divine Law. For Socrates argued that laws enacted by king, nobles, or people, when passed by force or fraud contrary to usefulness or expediency, want the highest characteristic of justice, God's approval, and usurp the second characteristic, man's approval; but that nevertheless they must be obeyed until they are repealed, in order to avoid greater evils—utter ruin of Law and utter hopelessness of Justice.

Socrates held that Politics must be founded on justice, and that as it is no easy matter to decide what is just in every case, Politics are not the slight thing which many make them; that knowledge of what is true must precede practice of what is right; that the first step towards a knowledge of justice is self-knowledge—knowledge of ourselves, knowledge of human nature, in order that we may understand what is good and useful and beautiful, for that these qualities are always relative and proportionate to the nature of man; that the second step towards a knowledge of justice is to attend to the *communis sensus hominum*, for that when really ascertained it indicates to us the divine command; that the third step towards a knowledge of justice is to attend to the consequences of actions whether useful or mischievous, as the former a
and the latter *unjust*; that in order to obta

ledge of justice and skill as a politician, there must be learning from a master of this great science, and free discussion with him and in his presence, or that mere empirical dexterity will be picked up at the expense of the community by means of foolish and mischievous and wicked experiments; that as justice is the means by which the real politician produces happiness, so rulers are appointed for the good of the community, not to gratify their own passions and desires; that men who are fit for this high and noble service should undertake it, whilst those who are unfit for it should decline it,—for that not the vote of the many nor the few can confer just authority when the party is incapable of using power for a good purpose. In a word, that politics are the carrying out on a large scale of the wisdom and virtue of private life, and that he who is a foolish or bad man cannot be a wise and good citizen.

The above analysis of Socrates' view of justice or usefulness, collected from the *Memorabilia*, has been made with as conscientious an accuracy in comparing passage with passage as we could employ in such a service. It has left upon our minds a conviction that Socrates' views of practical virtue, private and public, were as full and clear as his views of religious principle, and that both are worthy of that noble Self-command which he insists on as the foundation of intellectual and moral and political excellence.

Should any one affect to make no distinction between pleasure and happiness, expediency and duty, he may see that the facts which have been set forth somewhat pompously as modern discoveries were known long ago*, and that the nomenclature he

* "But although this was the manner in which Socrates lived, yet could he not be persuaded that he enjoyed less of the pleasures of life *than the voluptuous* man, who employed all his thoughts in the pursuit *of them.*"—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 3.

desires to introduce was long ago deliberately rejected* on the ground, that practically it was more dangerous to virtue than theoretically valuable for science. Socrates was well acquainted with all the leading facts on which such theories and nomenclature have been founded by the utilitarian schools of Aristippus, Epicurus, and Aristotle; but whilst he states or admits his knowledge of these facts to Aristippus and to others, he insists upon a nomenclature which shall more clearly distinguish virtuous happiness from vicious pleasure. And he was right, right as a practical moralist, to insist upon reforming the phraseology of a corrupt and sophistical generation, as the first step towards teaching them sound principles and a virtuous practice. Aristippus had neither the prudence of Aristotle nor the sentiment of Epicurus, and so could not fight the battle of utilitarianism, as they could and did; but such armour, however forged and wielded, could not resist the divine temper of the weapons of Socrates. He contended that there must be a consciousness of duty to God in order that there may be man's reasonable service and appropriate virtue; for that no prudent choice of the more pleasurable pleasure in preference to the less pleasurable pleasure *can* constitute the service which the Deity requires from man, the service which a rational and conscientious, yet passion-tempted creature owes

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" If I am observed to be not over-delicate in my diet, if I sleep little, nor once taste of those infamous delights which others indulge in, assign no other cause than my being possessed of pleasures in themselves far more eligible, which delight not alone for the moment in which they are enjoyed, but gladden with the hope of yielding perpetual satisfaction."—*Memorabilia*, book i. chap. 6.

* " Nor do my votaries (Virtue is supposed to be speaking) fail to find pleasure in their repasts, though small cost is wanted to furnish out their table; for hunger, not art, prepares it for them; while their sleep, which follows the labours of the day, is far more sweet than whatever ease can procure for idleness; yet, sweet as it is, they quit it unreluctant called by their duty, whether to the gods or men."—Memorabilia chap. 1.—*See all the* quotations about the religion of Socrates.

to an Intelligent Creator. A virtue useful to nobody was no virtue at all in the opinion of Socrates; but he did not therefore infer that the *utile quidlibet* (not even the eternal utility of Paley) is the ultimate end of man. If we might borrow for an instant the bold humour of Rowland Hill, in a matter which calls for his strong good-sense, we would say that Socrates did not make the Deity so merely a *chip in porridge*, as to consider pleasure, happiness, or expediency, word it how you will, the ultimate end and aim of man's actions and desires. He saw indeed that human happiness (thoroughly, not partially understood,) affords the true measure of God's will to his rational creatures; yet *per hoc, non propter hoc*, was his fixed estimate of utility, or in other words, that usefulness is the rule or measure of action, but not the end or motive of action. Let me, he argued, be only sure that I have discovered what promotes human happiness, and I am sure that I have discovered what is God's will; but then, he contended, it immediately becomes our duty*, and not merely our interest, to do that will. Duty to God, man's reasonable service, has also this superiority, that it carries his moral capabilities to their highest point, giving him the consciousness of God's approval. Socrates did not begin by assuming, whether from prejudice or fanaticism, that a certain mode of conduct had the divine sanction, and then infer that such conduct *must* promote human happiness; but he first ascertained what *will* promote human happiness, and then inferred that this conduct

* Dr. Bowring tells us that "it is in fact very idle to talk about *duties*; the word itself has in it something *disagreeable and repulsive;* and talk about it as we may, the word will not become a rule of conduct." But will the more agreeable word *pleasure* become a rule of conduct? Can we cheat men into a discharging of their duties, by telling them they are pleasures? In the first place it is not possible; in the second place it is *not desirable.* Socrates took other means to prepare his pupils for the *steep ascent;* yet he told them also of the pleasures of a noble energy.

has the sanction of God's approval. That this is a fair estimate of the usefulness, the temperance, and the piety of Socrates, has already been proved by numerous quotations, and might be proved by many more. In a word, the great principles of conduct, as set forth by his philosophy, are—piety as the motive, usefulness as the measure, and self-command as the means. The order and connection of these principles, as they are exhibited in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, might be likened to the parts of a Doric column, and so presented to the sight. The base of the pedestal should be reverence for God. The die, or body of the pedestal, squared to a line, should be self-command. On this pedestal the shaft of the column should be usefulness to man, in all the relations of human life; and the capital, of perfect Doric simplicity, should be moral beauty.

In the visible metaphor by which we have illustrated the philosophy of Socrates, beauty, it will be observed, is made the capital. As we shall have a much better opportunity of treating this most sound, as it is most Grecian, principle, when we come to speak of the Socrates of Plato as compared with the Socrates of Xenophon, we will only add a picture of moral beauty, which must command admiration, respect, and love for the character and philosophy of Socrates, from every man that studies them *intelligently* and *fairly*, to the end of time; requiring that irreverent hands be withdrawn from that divine head, on which Xenophon has placed this simple and graceful wreath of a well-earned praise.

"As to myself, knowing him of a truth to be such a man as I have described; so pious towards the gods, as never to undertake anything without first consulting them; so just towards men, as never to do an injury, even [1] very slightest, to any one, whilst many and great benefits he conferred on all with whom he w

ings; so temperate and chaste, as not to indulge any appetite or inclination at the expense of whatever was modest and becoming; so prudent, as never to err in judging of good and evil, nor wanting the assistance of others to discriminate rightly concerning them; so able to discourse upon, and define with the greatest accuracy, not only those points of which we have been speaking, but likewise every other, and, looking as it were into the minds of men, discover the very moment for reprehending vice, or stimulating to the love of virtue: experiencing, as I have done, all these excellencies in Socrates, I can never cease considering him as the most virtuous and the most happy of all mankind. But if there is any one who is disposed to think otherwise, let him go and compare Socrates with any other, and afterwards let him determine."—*Memorabilia*, book iv. chap. 7.

There is something revolting to our sense of moral beauty, in turning from this picture of the philosopher of ancient times to the picture of the man of science, with which the reviewer of Bacon ends his work. We do not wish to dwell upon the contrast. That Bacon *was a man of science*, not, we think, *the* man of science, Socrates would have been the last person to dispute; nay, he would have been the first to yield him a title to which he had the fullest claim. Why then did Bacon condescend to deny, or even to dispute, Socrates' claim to the title of *philosopher?* May we not say that Socrates is *the* philosopher, not of antiquity only, but of all time? As a moral philosopher, estimated by the difficulties he had to encounter, the means he possessed and the effects he produced, we do not consider ourselves presumptuous in claiming the highest place for him. For his philosophy was a philosophy, not of flowers only, nor even of flowers and fruits, but it was a philosophy of seeds and plants, of buds, of flowers, and of fruits; yea, of future harvests.

We are sure that the reviewer of Bacon will not *take an unfair* advantage over us by replying that the

philosophy of Socrates blossomed and fruited indeed in his own principles and conduct, and in the wisdom and goodness of many of his friends and followers, but that it has had little practical effect on the world at large, and so may be called a philosophy of flowers. Such an assertion may be made by thousands with perfect sincerity, but assuredly not by any sound scholar; and by whomsoever it is made, and with whatever degree of sincerity, it certainly is not true. Socrates did *not* live in vain, neither did he die in vain, in so far as the world's principles and practices are concerned. That his philosophy did not bear and has not borne *all* the fruit that might have been expected from the blossoms, are faults or defects for which neither he nor his philosophy is answerable.

Is it urged that these lessons were not found sufficient for the world? Of course they were not sufficient, if they were not sufficiently applied. If the statesmen and the priests of Greece would not do what was necessary to bring the lessons of Socrates and of his school home to the minds of the people, of course the teaching of Socrates was insufficient,—insufficient, that is, to arrest religious, moral, and political anarchy,—insufficient, that is, to establish in men's minds the religious, the moral and the political obligations, which alone could have saved Greece. If the statesman and the priest did not apply the remedy, of course the disease was not cured. It was contended by Aristophanes, and doubtless by Melitus, that the established religion and the established discipline were sufficient to correct the evils of the times, or at least, if they were insufficient, it was only because they had been relaxed, and all that was required was to urge them on the public mind more intensely. So Aristophanes and Melitus contended, when they accused Socrates of impiety, innovation, and anarchy. But the true question was, (and the answer is plain in the

present time,) whether the religion of Greece could continue to be a sufficient foundation for principles and conduct, under any other mode of reception than that which Socrates has suggested in his explanation of the myths of Homer, and of which he has given so beautiful an example in his version of the *Choice of Hercules*. His views tend indeed to the reformation of all religions; but it is by a method very different from that of the iconoclast. The reformation he proposed would break down nothing with which piety and obligation are associated. All he requires is to give a sounder interpretation to the letter, and not to persist too long, and till it is too late, in giving a real sense to that which ought to be received as mystic. We leave to phrenologists to explain the action of the brain, but we believe that it becomes *physically impossible* at advanced periods to believe what at earlier periods is perfectly credible. Statesmen may keep men's heads as cool as they can by fetters for the body and dogmas for the mind; but the progress of events, accelerating intellectual development with a velocity at once fearful and hopeful, must convince *the real statesman* (O that he would arise!) that one mode of conduct is alone safe, as it alone is reasonable and conscientious, at least in a man of sound knowledge; in a man, for example, who knows all that may be known and will be known of the religion and philosophy of Greece. That philosophy, the philosophy of Socrates, we further contend, has not been in vain, in so far as the world at large has received it in various forms; though, alas! it was not allowed by her priests and statesmen to save Greece.

Shall we be told that now at least the philosophy of Socrates has done all its allotted work, and therefore is cast aside by scholars and universities, religionists, philosophers, and statesmen? Shall we be told this in an age which still echoes the fearful words—"Mortels!

cessez de trembler devant les foudres impuissans d'un Dieu créé par vos terreurs*;"—in an age which has seen the certain commentary on such a text, "Ce ne sont pas seulement les sciences, les arts consolateurs, les arts utils qui vont périr; ce sont les premiers liens de la société, les plus saintes affections qui sont rompus avec fureur. L'imagination ne peut concevoir une plus affreuse pensée qu'un tel peuple exerçant ses fureurs au centre de l'Europe?"

In an age which re-echoes those fearful words, and which has its own debt, deficit, and droits de Seigneur, even if it had no other resemblance to the *age of reason*, are we to be told that the philosophy of Socrates has done its work? We look for some great statesman to arise who may be aware that *all* our powers for good are wanted to resist evil. We Protestants censure the Church of Rome for silencing, or attempting to silence Galileo, being ourselves convinced that all physical truth ought to be known. Is moral truth then so unimportant, that Protestants may silence the testimony of Socrates, hide the facts of his life, and neglect his convincing reasonings?—nay, may misrepresent them at their pleasure? Does the history of the world so abound in unquestionable and irresistible evidence and testimony of the great truths which he demonstrated and testified, both in his life and by his death, that we may neglect his testimony?

Bacon may be a good witness of physical usefulness, and Bentham a still better witness of political usefulness; we would neither dispute their claim, nor derogate from its value; but we ask, where shall we find such a witness as Socrates of moral, including religious principle? Has the world's history three such con-

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* See LACRETELLE's *History of the Revolution*. But see, above all, Carlyle's masterly *History*. We speak not of its style, which is not to our taste, but of its large grasp of the subject.

nected witnesses, such a body of evidence, as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle supply? Why are they hidden, or made known to comparatively a few; and even that with no deeper sincerity, no larger truth, than some of the criticisms of our fatherland supply? If Dr. Arnold thought rightly, that the *History of Thucydides* is of the deepest importance and closest applicability to our own times and interests and circumstances, is there no sound parallelism in the reasoning which would prove that the philosophy of Socrates comes home to our business and bosoms?

The claim of Socrates to our admiration, respect, and love, forms a great body of evidence in itself, and is perfectly compatible with other evidence, in whatever form it be received; but certainly is most compatible with the acceptance of other evidence in the form in which it is most true, and in which ultimately it can be received with most sincerity. Here is something sounder in principle, feeling, and conduct, than that cry of weakness and despair—"La nation reconnait l'existence de l'Etre Suprême et l'immortalité de l'âme,"—that cry which came too late*.

We turn to the philosophy of Bacon as set forth by his reviewer, and we ask whether *the fruits* of Bacon's physical science, which we would in no wise deny or undervalue, are fitted to be the moral and the spiritual food of man? Man does not live by bread alone. We admit, or rather we contend, that the Creator of man wills that he be fed better physically than he has been or now is: and towards this end Bacon did much, and Bentham did more, though not all; for, we repeat, man does not live by bread alone. He not only has higher and nobler desires, but these higher

* On what view of Christianity taken by the French church *can* such a system of Education, Piety, and Morality be founded, as may be a guarantee for the peace of Europe and the world against the passions of that excitable people?

and nobler desires must be gratified, before he can eat his daily bread in peace and safety,—ay, before he can *have* a full and assured supply of daily bread to eat. For what is more obvious than that the moral principles on which Bacon *acted* would, if they prevailed, render of no effect the physical principles he desired to establish?

'Not so with Socrates. In his life, and by his death, he exemplified the principles which he taught; principles which make individuals, families, and states most happy; principles not to be taken upon trust, but requiring God's *rational* creatures to examine them, whether they are useful, pure, and holy; and when this *has* been ascertained, requiring God's *moral* creatures to practise them, conscientiously, sincerely, truly. For Socrates points out distinctly that knowledge without practice is not knowledge*; and that the philosopher is, not he who knows, but he who *knows and does.*

We regret to find amongst the depreciators of the Socrates of Xenophon a laborious German scholar, Schleiermacher, author of a valuable work on the *Dialogues of Plato*, and whose opinion on such a subject cannot be passed over without notice. Speaking of the author of the *Memorabilia*, (we quote the passage from the little work of Dr. Wiggers,) Schleiermacher says:—

"If we believe Xenophon, and in this respect we cannot doubt the accuracy of the contemporary apologist, that Socrates spent the whole of his time in public places, and suppose that he was always engaged in discourses, which, though they may have been more beautiful, varied, and dazzling, were still in substance the same as these, and

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* See *Memorabilia*, book iv. chap. 6.

moved in the same sphere to which the *Memorabilia* are confined, one is at a loss to understand how it was in the course of so many years that Socrates did not clear the market-place and work-shops, the walks and the wrestling schools by the dread of his presence; and how it was that in Xenophon's native Flemish style of painting the weariness of the interlocutors is not still more strongly expressed than we here and there actually find it: and still less should we be able to comprehend why men of such abilities as Critias and Alcibiades, and others formed by nature for speculation, as Plato and Euclid, set so high a value on their intercourse with Socrates, and found satisfaction in it so long*."

With every allowance to a critic fresh from the unequalled style of Plato, (we speak not of the *Platonic Monologues*, which Schleiermacher so much admires, but of the *Socratic Dialogues*, which he considers as introductory works,) still, after every allowance for the seductions of Plato's Ionic gracefulness, we are surprised at a German scholar finding Xenophon's narrative flat and heavy. The style of Xenophon may, like his nature, be cold, but it is clear and pure; and a cold, clear, pure draught has its own peculiar merits. The coldness of Xenophon's manner, contrasted with the internal heat of his matter, not the less real for being sometimes latent, is a proof of the genuineness of his work. In some cases there is a striving to report conversations exactly as they occurred, when it is obvious that the reporter cannot ascend to the height of the argument. In other cases, Xenophon is as little able to give us a bold free copy of the broad humour of Socrates, as it would have been within the power of Addison to do full justice to the character of Falstaff. Yet even in such instances of failure, the value of a conscientious wit-

* Dr. Wiggers' *Life of Socrates*, p. 139.

ness, who *strives* to give his evidence correctly, is known to every judge. Who cannot see the strength and freedom of Socrates in the somewhat stiff and formal copy of Xenophon, just as in Albert Durer's hard outlines and cold colouring, we find, not only a more exact, but even a more spirited representation than could be given by many a more free and warm pencil? Whatever may be the charm of Plato's design and colouring, who does not see that the reality and individuality of the character of Socrates would never have been established, had it not been for this hard, cold, stiff copy of Xenophon, if Schleiermacher insists on so describing it? It is the *Banquet* of Xenophon which assures us that the *Banquet* of Plato is not a mere Tam o' Shanter creation of the inventive mind of Plato. In like manner, when we see the Sophists, Protagoras and Gorgias, struggling in the logical net of Socrates, we might attribute the whole scene to the imagination of the Homer of Philosophy, if Socrates' conversations with Aristippus and Hippias were not plain facts, recorded in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon. We will not stop to remark, that in many cases the Flemish style of Xenophon, like the delicate humour of our own Addison, exactly suits the subjects and the characters, especially in elementary conversations with young men, and fetches out the charming pleasantry of Socrates with both force and grace. But we are forgetting that Schleiermacher's criticisms are not intended to be an attack on Xenophon, but rather a eulogium on Plato, to whom, indeed, he offers up a greater sacrifice.

"If I am not mistaken, (we are again quoting the words of Schleiermacher,) it is actually the case with Socrates that the portrait usually drawn of him, and the historical importance which is almost unanimously attributed to him, are at irreconcileable variance. With Socrates most writers make a new period to begin in the history of Greek

Philosophy, which at all events manifestly implies that he breathed a new spirit and character into those intellectual exertions of his countrymen which we comprehend under the name of philosophy, so that they assumed a new form under his hands, or at least, that he materially widened their range. But if we inquire how the same writers describe Socrates as an individual, we find nothing that can serve as a foundation for the influence they assign to him. We are informed that he did not at all busy himself with physical investigations, which constitute the main part even of Greek philosophy, but rather withheld others from them; and that even with regard to moral inquiries, which were those in which he engaged the deepest, he did not by any means aim at reducing them into a scientific shape, and that he established no fixed principles for this, any more than for any other branch of human knowledge. The base of his intellectual constitution, we are told, was rather religious than speculative, his exertions rather those of a good citizen, directed to the improvement of the people, and especially of the young, than those of a philosopher; in short, he is represented as a virtuoso in the exercise of sound common sense, and of that strict integrity and mild philanthropy with which it is always associated in an uncorrupted mind; all this, however, tinged with a slight air of enthusiasm. These are no doubt excellent qualities; but yet they are not such as fit a man to play a brilliant part in history, but rather, unless where peculiar circumstances intervene, to lead a life of enviable tranquillity, so that it would be necessary to ascribe the general reputation of Socrates, and the almost unexampled homage which has been paid to him by so many generations, less to himself than to such peculiar circumstances. But least of all are these the qualities which could have produced conspicuous and permanent effects on the exertions of a people already far advanced in intellectual culture. And this is confirmed, when we consider what sort of doctrines and opinions are attributed to Socrates in conformity with this view. For, in spite of the attempt to trick them out

with a show of philosophy, it is impossible after all to give them any scientific solidity whatever: the farthest point we come to is, that they are thoughts well suited to warm the hearts of men in favour of goodness, but such as a healthy understanding fully awakened to reflection cannot fail to light upon itself*."

Really, if a learned German, well read in the writings of Xenophon and Plato, can speak thus of Socrates, we cannot wonder at other writers talking of Socrates as if he had been greatly over-estimated by the men of his time, and as if our obligations to him are by no means considerable. We had lost all patience before we finished transcribing the passage, and if it had not come with the authority of a scholar whose dicta respecting Socrates and Plato are considered to have weight, and if it had not also expressed very fully and fairly a not uncommon opinion respecting the philosophy of Socrates, we should not have troubled our readers and ourselves with criticisms of so very slight a texture.

Let us dismiss for the present all thought of Plato's writings, and take Socrates on the showing of Xenophon, and on the admissions of Schleiermacher. Does the learned German deny the character of Philosopher to Socrates *because* "his exertions were directed to the improvement of the people, and especially of the young;" *because* he possessed "sound common sense, strict integrity, and mild philanthropy;" *because* "the base of his intellectual constitution was religious"? It really would appear that these sound intellectual and moral characteristics of Socrates actually stood in the way of Schleiermacher's allowing him to be a Philosopher. Or, is it *because* Socrates "did not busy himself with physical investigations" (the false physics of that day), that the character of moral philosopher is

* Dr. Wiggers' *Life of Socrates*, p. 130

refused him by Schleiermacher? The questions we have asked are not captious, but must occur to every one who compares what Schleiermacher admits respecting Socrates with what he denies. But let us take Schleiermacher's summary of his reasons for refusing to Socrates the character of a Philosopher. It is because Socrates "established no fixed principles in morals any more than in many other branches of knowledge," that Schleiermacher, to use his own words, "found it impossible after all to give his speculations any scientific solidity whatever."

"Scientific solidity!" Philosophers stand firmly on the principles of Socrates, on his observations and inferences, and they talk of "scientific solidity." They plant their ladders on that firm ground, and climb a few steps into the air, and they talk of "scientific solidity." They cultivate a few flowers on that good soil, and are proud that their labours are not swept away by rushing torrents and encroaching sands, and they talk of "scientific solidity." But this is not all. Schleiermacher's preference of Plato to Socrates is in fact the child's mistake of admiring a complicated piece of machinery, in which ingenuity is too often misapplied and power wasted, more than a machine which effects a great object by the fewest and simplest movements possible. That the Philosophy of Socrates was at once simple and effective has, we trust, been made sufficiently evident. What are the characteristics of the Philosophy of Plato we have yet to examine. Unless we are quite mistaken in our estimate, it will be found that Schleiermacher is guilty of the somewhat critical, but very unphilosophical, mistake of preferring the invention of a few scientific terms, and the dexterous and imposing use of scientific phraseology in speculation, (for such were the peculiar merits of Plato, and, we might add, of Zeno,) to the observation, and demonstration, the

defining and the applying, of the great leading truths of moral philosophy. In morals, as in physics, terminology and system are pretty sure to follow, and cannot possibly precede, the discoveries which suggest them. It is not our fault that we are stating self-evident truths in tautological language. We appeal to what we have already shown respecting the Socrates of Xenophon, independently of what we have yet to show respecting the Socrates of Plato, to prove that to Socrates belongs the demonstration, (and such demonstration of moral truths almost ranks with discovery in physical truth,) of a body of principles which bears a larger ratio to Morals, than the discoveries of Newton do to Physics. So active an observer of moral facts, so sound a deducer of moral principles, so accurate a stater of facts, so clear a definer of principles, is entitled by the mass of questions respecting expediency and duty, which he settled, to the character of a great philosopher. Let us be allowed to add, that men are too apt to think and talk of Socrates, as if he had the works of Bacon and Bentham to guide him; at least, as if he had come after, and not preceded, the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno.

We are too apt to forget that Socrates had to build up moral philosophy, implying the settling of an intellectual system, (for men must know what is true, before they can be convinced of what is right,) upon the shifting sands of mythologists and poets, cosmogonists and sentence-makers, mystics and dogmatists, that is, he had to distinguish what was sound and good from what was unsound and evil. Doubtless, there was much good material to be found in the epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry of Greece; also the searching tests of inquiry and satire, in the advancing forms of history and comedy, were suggesting that all was not gold that glittered. But there was an exaggeration, a contentiousness and a vanity, sprung doubt-

less from Olympia and Nemæa, which was the very leaven of the Greek character; so that he who struck out a new and good thing, whilst he was stimulated to perfect its form, was too often urged on till he had spoiled its spirit. With such a national character, and at such a period, and with such materials submitted to his judgment, not only wisdom in judging, but character for accrediting, were indispensable requisites; and yet the character of Philosopher is refused to Socrates, whilst it is claimed for Plato, (as we shall see presently,) for building unsound theories on the sound foundation of Socrates. To lay that foundation had been a Herculean task, equalled only by the judgment shown in the selection of materials; but by some critics, nay, by some philosophers, that work, because it has become hidden under the surface, is to be undervalued, whilst the trim garden, the blooming flowers, and, above all, the ladder planted against the sky of Plato, fill them with a childish admiration. For the explanation of Schleiermacher's depreciation of Socrates is, that Plato is Schleiermacher's idol, and the philosopher who was least like Plato is least likely to please Schleiermacher. Unfortunately, that sort of cannibalism, which urges one savage to kill and eat another, in order to inherit his bravery as well as his exploits, is not thought unworthy of critics and philosophers. And if, as we shall see presently, Plato has grown to a great size at the expense and to the injury of Socrates, there have not been wanting Platonists and Gnostics, Platonic Fathers and Platonic Scholars to champion that act of usurpation. But if the philosophy of Socrates was what we have shown it from the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon,—if Socrates himself was the sound-minded man (amidst so much which was unsound) that Schleiermacher's statement infers him to have been, can there be a doubt whether Socrates was a great Philosopher? Can there

be a doubt, considering the foundations he laid in human nature and human circumstances; considering his large inductions and conclusive reasonings, (the former having done so much towards opening *to* and *for* others the way of sound induction, and the latter having done so much towards opening to and for others the way of sound reasoning,) can there be a doubt that Socrates stands, taking the very lowest estimate, in the same relation to Morals, that Euclid does to Mathematics? Let it be granted that Plato is the Des Cartes, and that Aristotle is the Newton of Greek Moral Philosophy; we will be content that in simplicity of language, plainness of facts, and clearness of reasoning, the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon shall be allowed to possess the characteristics of Euclid. Those who know the importance of ground-work, whether in teaching or in learning, in theory or in practice, will not think we have claimed an unworthy place in Moral Philosophy for the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon.

THE SENSUALISM OF PLATO*.

Professor Sewell is not prepared to push Socrates from the chair of moral science on the ground of possessing "no scientific solidity whatever," though we see little difference between his estimate and that of Schleiermacher, since, though he also pays invidious compliments to the practical virtues of Socrates, he hesitates whether to consider him a sort of bare-footed friar, the grotesque mouth-piece of Plato's wisdom, or a mere Chorus in Plato's Dramas†. Upon the soundness and fairness of these estimates of Socrates we shall enable our readers to judge for themselves.

Professor Sewell's admiration of Plato surpasses even that of Schleiermacher. "'The Homer of Philosophy speaking in the language of Jupiter'—the master of Demosthenes—'in irridendis oratoribus orator summus'—the biographer of the most interesting character of antiquity, the Boswell of Socrates—the 'Ille Deus Noster' of the creator of Roman Philosophy—the truth-loving Plato of Clement—the maximus philosophorum of Ambrose—the Grecian Moses of Numenius—in the words of Augustin 'ille inter discipulos Socratis, qui non immerito excellentissimâ gloriâ claruit, qui omnino cæteros obscuraret'—the 'prudentissimus philosophorum' of Jerome—the 'omnium sapientissimus' of Lactantius—the 'apex columenque

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* The works reviewed in this Article are—

1 *Horæ Platonicæ, or An Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato*, by W. Sewell, B.D., late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford.

2 *The Republic of Plato*, in Taylor's Translation of the Works of Plato.

† *See Horæ Platonicæ*, pp. 77, 78, 185.

philosophorum' of Arnobius—he who, in the words of Eusebius, 'alone of all the Greeks reached to the vestibule of truth and stood upon its threshold'—the former of Athanasius and the converter of Augustin*." Such are the *auctoritates præscriptæ* which bear testimony to the Plato of Professor Sewell. Nor does the late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford fall short of his authorities in the extravagance of his devotion to Plato, setting him forth as "the first of philosophers who made practical goodness and duty the one great end of life, and whose whole history, as well as his theories, is full, not of speculative fancies, but of views of practical improvement to society—the friend of Dion, the adviser of Dionysius, the pupil of Socrates, the writer of the *Republic*†." Or to sum up all in a few words, "He who by common consent is the Father and King of Philosophy‡." Yet Professor Sewell is forced to admit and complain "that Plato, the very dogmatist of Philosophy, has been made the ringleader of the Pyrrhonists and Sceptics; and that even the holiest and purest of ethics (which never stopped short of its object till man's mind was withdrawn from sense, and his heart fixed upon his God) has been calumniated and perverted§."

If the assertion can be made good that Plato's are "the holiest and purest of ethics," not in so far as Plato's Ethics are in effect the Ethics of Socrates, the thoughts of Socrates in the words of Plato, but in as far as Plato's Ethics are distinguishable from, often opposed to, the Ethics of Socrates (for we will not have Socrates vanquished by his own weapons, even though the blade may have been a little polished and the hilt may have been fresh gilded by Plato—we

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* *Horæ Platonicæ*, p. 4.
† Ibid. p. 21.
‡ Ibid. p. 96.
§ Ibid. p. 29.

will not pass to the credit of Plato a restatement of the principles and reasonings of Socrates, though finer language and a mystical phraseology have been employed to conceal the transfer)—then will we yield to Plato, and cease claiming for Socrates, that palm in Philosophy—(Ancient Moral Philosophy, if our readers prefer the expression)—which Professor Sewell claims for Plato.

Let us be allowed to add that as we protest against the wisdom and goodness of Socrates being passed to the account of Plato, (as if Plato were the author, and not the reporter, of the principles, reasonings, and character of Socrates,) so neither will we suffer the follies and sins of Plato to be imputed to Socrates, though it has pleased Plato to make Socrates the mouth-piece of some impracticable and vicious theories. Let us assign to each what is obviously and unquestionably his own,—and then there will be less difficulty in settling claims to what may be considered common property.

One great characteristic of Socrates, which the brevity of our last article, and the number of subjects we had to crowd into an insufficient space, caused us to touch upon very slightly, is that large benevolence, that love of man closely connected with Love of God, which more than any other characteristic of Socrates has been passed to the account of Plato. We will try the merits of the great master, and, as we are told, the greater scholar, on this question—the love of Plato *versus* the love of Socrates. It is the more desirable that we should do so, because this comparison of Socrates and Plato will tend more than any other to show whether, as Professor Sewell asserts, the Philosophy of Plato has been "calumniated and perverted," and whether the Philosophy of Socrates has not suffered for the sins and follies of Plato. A comparison between the *love of* Plato and the love of Socrates will also test the

truth of Professor Sewell's assertion that "Plato's whole history, as well as his theories, is full, not of speculative fancies, but of views of practical improvement to society." Lastly, the comparison will have the farther advantage of developing the connection between leading principles in Plato's character, and supplying the key to some of the most important parts, not to say to the whole body of his philosophy.

The comparison we propose to institute between Socrates and Plato does not resemble those vain and mischievous contests about the best State and the best Man, which so often in Greece made victory itself the signal for fierce jealousies, and ultimately delivered the Greeks, feeble because divided, a prey to the common enemy. If the Philosophers of Greece have one great common cause against Sophistry and Scepticism, Irreligion, Immorality, and Anarchy, or, in other words, against Aristippus, Alcibiades, and Critias,—for such was the ascent from theory to practice in the history of crime,—nothing would more tend to give union and consistence to that common cause, than to free it from the perplexities and contradictions which are summed up in the name of Plato, and to restore it to the plain facts and clear reasonings which are summed up in the name of Socrates. It may indeed be urged that the exhibition we shall have to make of the moral and intellectual defects of Plato will bring his authority into question; but if such an exposure of Plato has a tendency to add weight to the authority of Socrates, by making his moral purity and intellectual soundness more conspicuous, we cannot think that either speculative philosophy or practical principle will be a sufferer. Nor will the benefit be confined to Philosophy only, for as nothing can be more sound than the censure which St. Paul passes on a "vain philosophy," as at once the enemy and the corrupter of Christianity, so we contend that a sound philosophy

is, and may be made still more, the friend and ally of Religion. Religion will therefore be a gainer, should the discussion respecting the comparative merits of Socrates and Plato show us what is, and what is not, a vain philosophy, or, in other words, what is, and what is not, a sound philosophy.

Professor Sewell asserts that "Plato is the very Dogmatist of Philosophers;" and, such being the case, is surprised and indignant at his being accused of being "a ringleader of Pyrrhonists and Sceptics." We shall return to this subject presently, and will only remark here, that Dogmatism and Scepticism do not appear to us at all inconsistent. Indeed we pointed out in our last essay the remarkable though far from rare instance of Aristophanes playing the dogmatist to others and the sceptic himself at the same time. Professor Sewell claims for Plato the honour of being the opponent of Sophists, Sceptics, and Anarchists. The fact indeed happens to be so, but the inference Professor Sewell derives from it, that Platonism is the opposite to Scepticism, by no means follows. To us it appears to have been a chance, so far as Plato's wisdom and virtue were concerned in the decision, that he was not *facile princeps*, the very leader of those Rhetoricians, Sophists, Sceptics, and Anarchists whom it was his happiness to oppose. The same cannot be asserted of Socrates. His opposition to Sophistry in all its phases, Scepticism, Irreligion, and Immorality, and, in one word, Anarchy, was, like the choice of his Hercules, an act of the most deliberate preference, adhered to with admirable consistency through a long and active life, and testified at last by a glorious death. At present let us turn to the comparison by which we have proposed to test the merits of Socrates and Plato, to wit, their love, human and divine, their love to God and their love to man, in order to assign to each the principles and conduct

which belonged to him, and by which the character and philosophy of each must be estimated.

In estimating the Philosophy of Plato, as distinguished from the Philosophy of Socrates, are we at liberty to overlook the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, or to speak of it in the holiday and lady terms with which Professor Sewell gets over the difficulty, when seeking for a periphrasis least inconsistent with his theory that Plato's are "the holiest and purest of Ethics?" Here is a deliberate and systematic plan, introduced into the most highly-finished of Plato's works, the work which Schleiermacher considers the summary of Plato's System, and as the end and aim of all his other works, and which certainly received from Plato the highest polish and the most matured reflection, and which may therefore be denominated, if we may be allowed the expression, the most platonic of Plato's platonisms. Is it, we ask, possible either to leave out the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, or to slur it over, or to varnish and vamp it up, in making an estimate of the Philosophy of Plato as distinguished from the Philosophy of Socrates? More especially when the Fifth Book of the *Republic* may be shown to be the very key-stone of the arch, or to speak more appropriately, the clue to the labyrinth of Plato's system,—in a word, the very pivot on which the Philosophy of Plato turns. Whether our object be to do a tardy justice by distinguishing the Philosophy of Socrates from the Philosophy of Plato, or whether our object be to obtain a clear and full view of the ground-work and the first principles of Plato's System, as compared with the ground-work and first principles of the System of Socrates, we must not shrink from the duty of estimating the Fifth Book of the *Republic*. We hold in contempt the appetite for scandal and defamation, which would seek to depreciate the fame of Plato by laying bare failings from constitutional tendency and faults from

corrupt association, to both of which he was exposed in no common degree. Had he cast forth the Fifth Book of the *Republic* from an expurgated edition of his works—had he expressed regret at having sanctioned such speculations by his example and authority —had he intimated a late but sincere conviction that they are unsound speculations, and would be most mischievous in practice, we should desire to speak tenderly, but not lightly, of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*. Even in that case it would not be in our power to omit all consideration of a work which we shall show to be the very clue to the peculiar system of mysticism on which Plato's fame as a speculative philosopher and a moral reformer, more especially as distinguished from the speculations and practice of Socrates, may be shown to rest. But there is no such apology put forth by Plato for the Fifth Book of the *Republic* as can make us regret the necessity of examining the religious, moral, and political principles which it involves. There is, indeed, just so much consciousness expressed of the mischief he is about to do, and afterwards of the mischief he has done, as to prove that Plato would take no warning from his own misgivings. The Fifth Book of the *Republic* is in fact a deliberate attempt to moralize, legislate, and, if we may invent a term, to religionize, for the institution of principles and the establishing of practices on a large scale, which involve concubinage, infanticide, and other crimes and follies for which the world has happily not found it necessary to have names. By the retribution which not unfrequently causes sins against conscience to be visited on intellect, Plato exhibits in this book instances of a folly so ludicrous, as to become a sort of *reductio ad absurdum* of wickedness. What shall we say to Plato, after having settled that there shall be neither husbands nor wives, parents nor children, brothers nor sisters, amongst the

Guardians of his Republic; in other words, that there shall be a community of women, that parents shall not be allowed to know their children, and that children shall not be allowed to know their parents, and consequently that the tie of brotherhood and sisterhood shall not exist; and after providing that the atrocity of deliberate infanticide shall hover like a foul bird or beast of prey over this mass of corruption, to prevent it from destroying itself, what shall we say to Plato proposing to teach courage and tactics to these children of the state by bringing them on swift horses to watch their quasi fathers and quasi brothers, to say nothing of their quasi sisters and quasi mothers, fighting in battle with the enemy, with the intention of riding away and leaving them to their fate should the battle go against them? But as Professor Sewell tells us that Plato has been "calumniated," we will give an analysis of so much of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* as may suffice to draw a clear distinction, not only between the continence of Socrates and the sensualism of Plato, but between the common sense and sound principles of Socrates, and the absense of common sense and the opposite to sound principles in Plato. The danger of such things is not in exposing them, but in allowing them the protection of silence and the authority of a name.

The Fifth Book of the *Republic*, which has all the defective characteristics of the *Platonic Monologues* as compared with the *Socratic Dialogues*, opens by Socrates, the principal interlocutor of the dialogue, or rather the chief discourser in the monologue, (in which he is made to support opinions and principles altogether at variance from his own,) expressing a deep sense of the importance of the interests he is about to discuss, and of the great peril which attends mistakes about such subjects,—he also expresses a doubt of

being able to persuade his hearers of the expediency and practicability of the plan he is about to propose, and intimates that even he himself does not feel perfect conviction of its soundness; but he adds, that he would prefer to have the stain of blood upon his conscience to the guilt of perverting the fair and the good. Being, however, pressed by the other interlocutors to speak out, and they taking upon themselves all the blame and the mischief which may result from the discussion, he allows himself to be persuaded*, and proceeds to open his plan for the practical improvement of society in the following manner.

The common rules of temperance and justice, which have been laid down in the former books of the *Republic*, in agreement with the Philosophy of Socrates, are to be observed by the common herd of men and women in his Republic; but the Guardians, the male and female watch-dogs of the flock, are to be allowed to live together in a different manner. On the plea that the flock would be liable to mischances if the female watch-dogs were to be detained at home by the care of their young†, and that the female differs from the male only in having a smaller degree of strength of body and mind, he decides that the guardian-women must discharge all the duties, military and civil, of the guardian-men, according to their powers. And though this may make it necessary for women to go through the same course of gymnastic exercises as the men, Plato contends, that this change in the manners of women will not be a greater shock to popular opinion than the first introduction of men's

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* The reader will notice the use which Plato makes of Socrates and the other persons of the Dialogue, in delivering himself of a questionable and dangerous theory. There is both cowardice and calumny in thus laying his follies and sins on other men's shoulders.

† Such are the loose analogies which Plato is content to employ as arguments. Aristotle points them out in his *Politics* in his own cold, *clear, forcible* manner.

gymnastic exercises* into Greece. He contends farther, that there is just the same ground for the introduction of caste amongst women as amongst men, and that if it be right to have a fighting caste and a labouring caste and a governing caste among men, so it will be in the case of women, and thus he considers himself to have demonstrated the expediency of instituting a governing caste† of women.

He next decides that there must be no private rights amongst the male and female Guardians of the state, but that even women and children must be the common property, or rather the inappropriated common, of the men. For this purpose means must be taken that no parent may know his or her child, and that no child may know his or her parents. The consideration of the practicability of this he defers for the present, namely, till he has settled who are and who are not philosophers, who are and who are not fit to carry out these things. But, assuming that rulers of states may be induced to adopt this plan, he proceeds with its details. The guardian women are to be common property of the guardian men. Still, as those who attend to the breeding of horses, dogs, and hawks observe certain rules in pairing them together, and as strong remedies are allowed to be used in the cases which require them, he says that the officials to whom are to be entrusted the management of these matters must, in settling what males and females are to be paired together in the first instance, contrive to persuade the parties that all this is settled by chance-lots‡, but must manage that the handsomest persons

* Of some of the worst evils produced by the gymnastic exercises of the men, Plato shows himself in other places quite aware.

† The plan for giving women the elective franchise and parliamentary duties, that is, for making a few exceptions the ground-work of a rule, has the authority, *valeat quantum*, of Plato.

‡ The reader will not fail to observe the mass of contradiction, absurdity, and falsehood—to say nothing about gross indelicacy—involved in this plan.

shall always come together for the sake of keeping up a handsome breed, and that the children of such parents are to be preserved by the public nurses of the state, whilst the children which are not good-looking are to be privately made away with. Great care is also to be taken by the public nurses that parents may not know their own children, and that children may not know their own parents, to the intent that the ties of parental and filial love and respect may be extended as far as possible, to wit, by parents considering all children of a certain age as their own children, and children considering all parents of a certain age as their own parents*.

This will doubtless be considered a sufficient specimen of the sensual socialism of Plato. We will only add, that the details are given with perfect fairness. If there is ground for considering Plato sufficient authority for any of these things, we would not stand in the way of his obtaining a fair hearing for his plan.

Can it be necessary, in the country of Shakspere and Scott, to say nothing of Milton and Cowper, and of a cloud of other witnesses, and not to appeal to the Religion of Christ, as many of those who profess or hold a sensual socialism more or less similar to that of Plato would not be influenced by that appeal—can it, we repeat, be necessary, in a country which has had a literature so sound as that of England, to expose the shallow, and mean, and selfish characteristics of these plans for the practical improvement of society? Can it be possible that there is any truth in the mortifying assertion, though publicly vouched in Parliament, that such a plan as the socialism of Plato, or anything at all resembling it, has got footing in this country? And

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* Aristotle in his *Politics* has pointed out the inefficacy of this plan to accomplish the objects proposed by its originators in his own brief, conclusive, and cold manner, with much contempt and no indignation.

if it be so, who is in fault, the upper, the middle, or the lower orders; the religion, the philosophy, or the common sense of the country?

Must we after all admit that Plato anticipated a great discovery in morals and politics—that estimate of the relation of the sexes, which, as we are told by historians, distinguished the Celtic from the Teutonic Race even in the times of the Romans. Sir James Mackintosh tells us, in his *History*—and he quotes his authorities in proof of what he asserts—that our Teutonic ancestors, "though almost without clothing and without towns, and though a permanent appropriation of land to individuals was unknown to them, yet they alone among barbarians rejected polygamy. Female purity was respected, the female sex therefore was held in honour*." But of some tribes of the Celtic Race Sir James Mackintosh says, "Societies of men, generally composed of the nearest relations, had wives in common. The issue of this intercourse were held to belong to the men, if such there should be, who formed a separate lasting connection with their mother. Where that appropriation did not occur, no man was answerable for the care of the children. Perhaps (Sir James Mackintosh adds) no barbarous usage could mark a lower point in the scale of civilization†."

We would by no means derogate from that "love of liberty" in our Teutonic ancestors to which Sir James Mackintosh attributes so much‡; but we think more should have been said respecting the effects of "female purity," or, in other words, of Home, in the past history and future prospects of the Race to which he attributes, and from which he hopes so much. We are convinced that domestic virtue, public liberty, and national happiness will be found to be intimately con-

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* *History of England*, vol. i. p. 8. † Ibid., vol. i. p. 14.
‡ Ibid., vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

nected, and that their dependency is in the order in which we have placed the words. We are convinced that men who really have home blessings will not lightly risk them, whether by foreign war or civil broil, though they will be found most resolute in their resistance of foreign violence and civil oppression. The fact is, that such men have something to fight for, as well as something to keep them from fighting. We are convinced also that Home is the best rallying point against the vices of society, for however these may flourish out of doors, they cannot get into any Home without dissolving it; and, as has been said of Prayer, so it may be said of Home, either that the charities of Home will prevent profligacy, or that profligacy will break up the charities of Home. We cannot therefore think that in the reasons Sir James Mackintosh has assigned for the eminence of the Teutonic Race, sufficient importance has been attributed to the influence of Home, though he has noticed this distinction of the Teutonic from the Celtic Race in the manner we have quoted.

May we not say that a certain heartiness of feeling, a certain independence of character, a certain soundness of sense, and a certain energy of will, stopping short both of wild ferocity and vain display, do belong to the Teutonic Race, and have had, and long may they continue to have, their strong-hold, both for action and endurance, in the sanctity and purity of the domestic hearth? There husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, (aye, and the man-servant and the maid-servant, and the stranger within their gates) are wont to rally against the common evil, whether it come from within or from without, by violence or by fraud. We scarcely need add that we are speaking of real and not of apparent Homes. Now the very bond of union of a real Home is what Sir James Mackintosh has so admirably expressed,—

"Female purity was respected, the female sex therefore was held in honour." It is only where female purity really exists that the female sex is really held in honour, and it is there only that there is or can be a real Home.

But they tell us that the Teutonic race, both at home and abroad, is giving way to Celtic fashions. There is, it appears, a dawning on Northern barbarism of the wisdom of the East, the gallantry of the West, and, what shall we call it, the half-sensual, half-ascetic mysticism of the South. Nay, the primitive simplicity of savage nations, so much affected by the sentimental sensualists of the Rousseau school, is coming to us from those islands of the Pacific where men were singularly free from all jealousy about their wives. What an improvement in literature, as well as in philosophy—we say nothing about religion—when Posthumus may leave Imogen without a doubt, when *Othello* will be considered an excellent farce, though too improbable to waken any interest as a tragedy, and Cressida and Cleopatra as maid and wife will be preferred to Isabella and Imogen. Then will the *Comus* of Milton cease to be thought so exquisitely good and fair, except when translated into forms of Eden after the fall. Then will the *Republic* of Plato be preferred to the *Iliad* of Homer, and the *Henriade* of Voltaire to the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. There is one strong point in the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, which we beg our readers to remark, because it is full of meaning. In relieving women from love and duty to their husbands, Plato has at the same time relieved them from love and duty to their children, and in requiring them to love all children, he has allowed them to love all men. In this there is some knowledge of human nature, for it is a fact established by our private and public records, that when women desert their husbands, they commonly abandon their

children. We have heard it said that this moral harmony is confined to women, and does not apply to men's inconstancy. If we estimated feelings, and principles, and conduct by outward decencies, we should admit the alleged exception to be more real than we believe it to be. But though we cannot lay that flattering unction to our souls, it is obvious that the feelings, principles, and conduct of woman are all undermined when she deserts her home.

Let us not be told that the evils of inconstancy could be got rid of by legitimating the practice and making it general, after the manner of those Adamites, who proposed to revive a general state of innocence by stripping off their clothes. Just as well might it be pretended that to legitimate poisoning and to make it common, would prevent its evil consequences. The private and public history of the reigns of Louis XIV., the Regent Orleans, Louis XV., and part of the reign of Louis XVI., offer the means of a sufficiently large induction and a clear inference. Listen to the account given by one who took refuge from that moral deluge in the ark of domestic life, and who has left us a narrative unequalled in interest, in which we see how private licentiousness and public corruption (which are ever closely connected, being reciprocally cause and effect) were hurrying events into a state of inextricable confusion, and were preparing men's minds by wild passions and heartless indifference for scenes of still wilder anarchy and more reckless violence. Marmontel hoped, in becoming the husband of a woman of sense and virtue, that he had escaped that deluge. He had to learn that the moral storm which was prostrating the roof-tree of domestic life was ultimately to swell into a political tempest, and was utterly to wreck the vessel of the state. The following extract is taken from the third volume of the work which Marmontel has entitled *Mémoires d'un Père*

pour servir à l'Instruction de ses Enfans, but which contains lessons for the full-grown man, and applies immediately to the government of states:—

"It is very difficult for any one living in a society where principles and practices are openly corrupt, not to contract a certain degree of indulgence for fashionable vices. Opinion, example, vanity, and, above all, the blandishments of pleasure, pervert the rectitude of the moral sense, especially in young persons; whilst the light air and tone with which older libertines turn all virtuous scruples into ridicule, and make a jest of the rules of all sound principle, accustom the young gradually and insensibly to cease attaching any serious importance to them.

"Must I confess the truth? It is necessary to be a husband and a father to judge soundly of those contagious vices which attack principle at its very source, those soft and perfidious vices which carry misery, shame, hatred, desolation, and despair, into the bosoms of families. The unmarried man, insensible to afflictions which touch not him, thinks not of the tears he is causing to be shed, nor of the fury and vengeance he is lighting up in the hearts of his victims. Thinking only of stretching his web, and watching the moment for entangling his prey, he leaves out of his code of morals all respect for the most sacred of rights, or if a thought of those rights should chance to arise, he treats them as things fallen out of date and custom. What others allow themselves to do, and even to boast of having done, appears to him allowable, if not right.

"But so soon as he has himself become one of those whom the seductions of a practised corrupter may render miserable for life, when he begins to see that the arts, flattery, and attractions of some young coxcomb may, by overcoming the inexperience of a daughter, or the weakness of a wife, bring desolation and misery on a man of worth,—awakened to a full sense of *his own* danger, he feels sensibly that honour, and fidelity, and respect for conjugal and domestic rights, are, in the eyes of husbands and fathers,

the most inviolable of all rights, and he begins to look with a severe eye upon the criminality and shamelessness of licentious principles, however eloquently they may be tricked out, or with whatever specious appearances they are invested by practised and unprincipled writers*."

These are the opinions of one who had seen the effects of sensual socialism on private life, tested by a sufficiently wide induction, and who assuredly had not looked upon that scene of license with any stoic rigour or ascetic coldness. Marmontel lived to see the wild passions and the hard-heartedness, which are half hidden by the smiling mask of licentious indulgence, suddenly throw off all disguise, and become fierce agitators and tyrannous masters of the public mind. Already the nation was raising a general outcry against the political corruptions which had their root in private licentiousness. But who discerned the moral evils from which those political evils had been so long rising? Even at a later period the private profligacy of the Duke of Orleans and Mirabeau, of Danton, and of Marat, were scarcely supposed to be the causes of their political corruption. These men might have urged against the court party—

> Boundless intemperance
> In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
> The untimely emptying of the happy throne,
> And fall of many kings—

But with equal truth they must have added the rest of the quotation—

> . . . . but there is no bottom, none,
> In *our* voluptuousness.

In no history is the connection between private vice and public crime, and more especially between the

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* *Mémoires d'un Père pour servir à l'Instruction de ses Enfans*, vol. iii. p. 204.

vice of licentiousness and the crime of blood-guiltiness, so striking as in the history of France. Not the reign of our Henry VIII., nor the records of Eastern Despotism, can go beyond the history of France in that writing upon the wall. We do not wish to play inquisitor or censor on national character, but the page of history bears ample evidence that the close connection between French gallantry of one sort and the other, has been for ages an active disturber of the peace of Europe. Alas! we have our own national faults to answer for, and it becomes us not to be sharp-sighted to the faults of other nations. At least, let us turn our attention to cases where there may be less offence.

In order to form a full and clear estimate of the value of Plato's social sensualism, it is not necessary to travel out of the record of Greece for facts or arguments. And as the folly or guilt of Plato must depend on his having mistaken or misrepresented the evidence of his own times and country, and as it is impossible to estimate Plato's Philosophy without we know what evidence he disregarded, we will glance rapidly at the evidence which the history and literature of Greece offered to Plato respecting the value of the social sensualism he proposed to establish in his Republic.

The finest as well as the oldest picture of the blessings of affection between husband and wife (for we will descend to the use of no periphrasis), as compared with the evils of licentious passion, is to be found in the *Iliad*. It is history, and philosophy, and prophecy, speaking in the noblest language of poetry. The parting of Hector and Andromache, which may be considered the moral summary of the *Iliad*, is a history of sin and a prophecy of sorrow—of a sin ever darkening, and of a sorrow ever deepening, through the

national drama of Greece to the last act. It is a lesson which belongs to the whole world.

Quis regio in terris nostrum non plena laborum?

We care not what facts there are in Homer. History there is, in the sense of Greek character and Greek circumstances, in every line. It is the *Old Mortality* of three thousand years back, written with a deeper knowledge of national character, and a larger prophetic vision. The *Iliad* is the philosophy of Greek history. Thucydides has indeed attempted to bind Homer down to facts. In doing so, he appears to us to have derogated from Homer's real scope and value. But which of the Homeridæ, Rhapsodists, or Pisistratidæ, what prince, poet, or philosopher, (need we ask what commentator?) understood the simple but deep philosophy of Homer? The continence of Alexander might lay claim to that distinction, but the claim is forfeited by his love of war. Aristotle might urge the claim of having elaborated the edition of the Casket, but then it was to be carried in the war-chariot of his great pupil. The series of moral consequences in the *Iliad*, or, in other words, the philosophy of Homer, is as sound as it is simple,—Profligacy, thence War; thence Slavery; thence, again, increasing Profligacy; extended warfare, and more confirmed slavery—the same series returning again and again, but always tending to more extensive and deeper evils. The *Iliad*, with its sequel in the Dramatic Poetry of Greece, is a long series of sins and sorrows rising out of the pollution of the domestic hearth, and extending in its consequences from private suffering to public calamity. A perverted ingenuity may seek for historical contradictions in Homer, and a misapplied labour may strive to disprove the charge. But with the history of Greece before us, the philosophy of Homer is plain to be understood. Who, for example, can fail to apprehend the meaning of the lesson, in the parting of Hector and Andro-

mache? And who can fail to apply that lesson to the ultimate fate of Greece?

The father, silent, eyed his babe, and smiled.
Andromache, meantime, before him stood,
With streaming cheeks, hung on his hand, and said,
Thy own great courage will cut short thy days,
My noble Hector! neither pitiest thou
Thy helpless infant, or my hapless self,
Whose widowhood is near; for thou wilt fall
Ere long, assail'd by the whole host of Greece.
Then let me to the tomb, my best retreat
When thou art slain. For comfort none or joy
Can I expect, thy day of life extinct,
But thenceforth, sorrow. Father I have none;
No mother. When Cilicia's city, Thebes
The populous, was by Achilles sack'd,
He slew my father; yet his gorgeous arms
Stripped not, through reverence of him, but consumed,
Arm'd as it was, his body on the pile,
And heap'd his tomb, which the Oreades,
Jove's daughters, had with elms inclosed around.
My seven brothers, glory of our house,
All in one day descended to the shades;
For brave Achilles, while they fed their herds
And snowy flocks together, slew them all.
My mother, Queen of the well-wooded realm
Of Hypoplacian Thebes, her hither brought
Among his other spoils, he loosed again
At an inestimable ransom price,
But by Diana* pierced, she died at home.
Yet Hector—oh my husband! I in thee
Find parents, brothers, all that I have lost.
Come! have compassion on us. Go not hence,
But guard this turret, lest of me thou make
A widow, and an orphan of thy boy.

* Sudden deaths were ascribed either to Diana or Apollo.

The city walls are easiest of ascent
At yonder fig-tree: station there thy powers;
For whether by a prophet warn'd, or taught
By search and observation, in that part
Each Ajax with Idomeneus of Crete,
The sons of Atreus, and the valiant son
Of Tydeus, have now thrice assail'd the town.

To whom the leader of the host of Troy—
These cares, Andromache, which thee engage,
All touch me also; but I dread to incur
The scorn of male and female tongues in Troy,
If, dastard-like, I should decline the fight.
Nor feel I such a wish. No. I have learn'd
To be courageous ever, in the van
Among the flower of Ilium to assert
My glorious father's honour, and my own.
For that the day shall come, when sacred Troy,
When Priam, and the people of the old
Spear-practised King shall perish, well I know.
But for no Trojan sorrows yet to come
So much I mourn, not e'en for Hecuba,
Nor yet for Priam, nor for all the brave
Of my own brothers who shall kiss the dust,
As for thyself, when some Achaian Chief
Shall have conveyed thee weeping hence, thy sun
Of peace and liberty for ever set.
Then shalt thou toil in Argos at the loom
For a task-mistress, and constrain'd shalt draw
From Hypereïa's fount, or from the fount
Messeïs, water at her proud command.
Some Grecian then, seeing thy tears, shall say—
"This was the wife of Hector, who excell'd
All Troy in fight when Ilium was besieged."
Such he shall speak thee, and thy heart, the while,
Shall bleed afresh for want of such a friend
To stand between captivity and thee.
But may I rest beneath my hill of earth

Or ere that day arrive! I would not live
To hear thy cries, and see thee torn away.

So saying, illustrious Hector stretched his arms
Forth to his son, but with a scream, the child
Fell back into the bosom of his nurse,
His father's aspect dreading, whose bright arms
He had attentive mark'd and shaggy crest
Playing tremendous o'er his helmet height.
His father and his gentle mother laugh'd,
And noble Hector, lifting from his head
His dazzling helmet, placed it on the ground,
Then kiss'd his boy and dandled him, and thus
In earnest prayer the heavenly powers implored:

Hear, all ye Gods! as ye have given to me,
So also on my son excelling might
Bestow, with chief authority in Troy.
And be his record this, in time to come,
When he returns from battle—Lo! how far
The son excels the sire! May every foe
Fall under him, and he come laden home
With spoils blood-stained to his dear mother's joy.

He said, and gave his infant to the arms
Of his Andromache, who him received
Into her fragrant bosom, bitter tears
With sweet smiles mingling.

Compare the sorrows and consolations and principles of Hector and Andromache, with the shallow and perturbed joys of Paris and Helen drawn by the same master hand. The language of Poetry requires at a certain period to be translated into, or rather, to be commented upon, by the language of Philosophy, or, in other words, the standard of a nation requires to be advanced. Homer was the Standard of Greece, in arts as well as arms, in civilization as well as in con-

quest. But Homer was the Standard of Greece, in language, thought, and principle, in taste, manners, and customs. More than all, Homer was the Standard of Greece in that great battle which every state, and family, and individual, has to fight with the subverters of the domestic hearth. The Standard of Homer required, we repeat, to be advanced, (an important truth which the pseudo-Homeric enthusiasm of Aristophanes did not allow him to perceive,) but it was a shallow philosophy which could persuade any Greek to abandon the standard of Homer. Where would Athens, and Sparta, and Thebes—where would Marathon, and Thermopylæ, and Plateæ—where would Socrates, and Aristotle, and Plato, have been without Homer? Homer is the Poet of Greece, not as having been produced by Greece, but as having produced Greece. The disputed questions, whether the *Iliad* was the work of one bard or of many bards; whether the events are to be considered fabulous or historical, are quite secondary to this great fact, that the *Iliad* was the Standard of Greece. This is a phenomenon at once most curious and most interesting, and which gives an unparalleled importance to Homer. The *Iliad* of Homer and the principles of Homer have been proved incapable of decay. The sands of the desert will overwhelm the Pyramids of Egypt, and the air will wear away the Monuments of Greece, but the poetry and the principles of Homer will triumph over natural decay, though aided by the censures of Plato.

Neither the reciter of the *Iliad* nor the student of Homer could anticipate the national debasement, the shallowness of mind, the corruption of moral principle, and the want of common sense, found in the Fifth Book of Plato's *Republic*. Yet they might find in Homer a fearful record of sins against the domestic hearth, darkly ominous of future calamities to Greece. In the parting of Hector and Andromache we read

of all the males of a family being destroyed and all the women carried into captivity, and the miserable object of these crimes is made but too plain. It was the foul spot on the very hearth of Greece from which pollution and violence spread as from a centre. Æschylus treads in the steps of Homer when he makes the connection between the licentious and violent passions the ground-work of a tragedy worthy to be compared with the *Othello* of Shakspere. Did Plato suppose that he could break the indissoluble chain of Homer, or turn aside the swift-following furies of crime, or that he could make the blood of the child expiate the sins of the parent? could he not divine that those who added infanticide to adultery would be driven on by the furies of remorse and the necessities of crime to shed more blood? Or is the history of Greece more silent than her poetry respecting the miserable consequences of such things?

Behold the philosophic statesman defiling the marble of his Propylea with dark suspicion of licentiousness and corruption, and rushing into that fatal war in order to hide the stain! When on his death-bed Pericles boasted that he had never made an Athenian weep, did he expect to be believed? Behold that darkest action of Alcibiades' dark life, (that darkest action of the most brilliantly intellectual, but darkest moral period of Greece,) in which murder and rape were let loose upon a whole people, and the spoil was brought into the treasury of Athens. Who does not see a retributive providence clearly revealed in the known issues of such things? That the intellectual defects of Alcibiades, the defects which caused the ruin of his party and his country, are referrible to his moral defects, to the cravings of infinite desire, and the stimulants of an unbounded ambition, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. In the whole course of history there does not occur so striking a

religious and moral lesson as Alcibiades witnessing the battle of Agos Potami from his tower by the Hellespont,—the fact that his cleverness anticipated the school-boy trick by which Lysander annihilated the power of Athens at a blow,—the fact that his treachery and insolence, his licentiousness and corruption, had not left him sufficient influence with his countrymen to make them pay any heed to his warning. With what feelings must this seducer of man and woman, this realizer of the ideal types of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, have turned to hide his infamy amongst the vices and crimes of Asia! But let no one say that Greece was punished for the licentiousness and corruptions of her rulers. We are told by the historian of Greece, that the madness of foreign war and the fury of civil faction were not softened by the charities of home; that they were stimulated by the wildest desires and the fiercest passions; and the assertion is borne out by all the details of that great work which Hobbes, in his dedication to Sir William Cavendish, describes as "having profitable instruction for noble men, and for such as come to have the management of great and weighty actions."

The question may be fairly asked, how two of the most distinguished pupils of Socrates, Plato and Alcibiades, became so remarkable for sensualism, the one in speculation and the other in practice. The real origin of Plato's sensual theory we propose to inquire into presently. That the sensual practice of Alcibiades could not be referred to the teaching and example of Socrates, is shown by Xenophon in reply to his accusers.

"But, adds his accuser, Critias and Alcibiades were two of his intimate friends, and these were not only the most profligate of mankind, but involved their country in the greatest misfortunes; for as among the thirty none was ever found so cruel and rapacious as Critias, so during the

democracy none was so audacious, so dissolute, or so insolent as Alcibiades.

"Now," continues Xenophon, "I shall not take upon me to exculpate either of these men, but shall only relate at what *time*, and, as I think, to what *end*, they became the followers of Socrates.

"Critias and Alcibiades were, of all the Athenians, by nature the most ambitious; aiming, at what price soever, to set themselves at the head of the commonwealth, and thereby to exalt their names beyond that of any other: they saw that Socrates lived well satisfied with his scanty possessions; that he could restrain every passion within its proper bounds, and lead the minds of his hearers, by the power of his reasoning, to what purpose he most desired. Understanding *this*, and being such men as we have described them, will any one say it was the temperance of Socrates, or his way of life, they were in love with; but not rather, that by hearing his discourses and observing his actions, they might the better know how to manage their affairs, and harangue the people."

We will interrupt the quotation by observing that God only can read the heart, and that Milton on a great occasion says well—

> For neither man nor angel can discern
> Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
> Invisible, except to God alone.

If Alcibiades and Critias had their own objects in procuring admission into the school of Socrates, so had Socrates in admitting them, the one being the poor ambition of sophistical and rhetorical success with the people of Athens, the other being the great and worthy purpose of training up two young men of talent and station to serve their country virtuously and honourably. But let us proceed with the quotation.

"Perhaps it may be objected that Socrates ought not to have discoursed with his followers on the affairs of government, till he had first instructed them how to behave with

temperance and discretion. Far am I from saying otherwise; and shall only observe, that it is commonly the practice with those who are teachers of others, to perform in the presence of their pupils the things they would recommend; to the end that, while they inforced them on their minds by the strength of their reasonings, they might set forth by their example the manner in which they are done.

"Now with respect to either of these methods of instruction, I know not any who went beyond Socrates; his whole life serving as an example of the most unblemished integrity; at the same time that he ever reasoned with peculiar force and energy on virtue, and those several duties which are becoming us as men*. And it is certain that even Critias and Alcibiades themselves behaved soberly and wisely all the time they conversed with him; not that they feared punishment, but as supposing that a regular conduct would best serve the end they had in view. Wherefore I can well imagine that even Alcibiades and Critias could restrain their vicious inclinations while they associated with Socrates, and had the assistance of his example; but being at a distance from him, Critias retiring into Thessaly, *there* very soon completed his ruin, by choosing to associate with libertines rather than with such as were men of sobriety and integrity; while Alcibiades, seeing himself sought after by women of the highest rank on account of his beauty, and at the same time much flattered by many who were then in power because of the credit he had gained, not only at Athens but with such as were in alliance with her,—in a word, perceiving how much he was the favourite of the people—became altogether degenerate, and rose to that height of pride and insolence to which we have been witnesses†."

We shall presently see that the speculative sen-

* Let us bear constantly in mind that Socrates founded his moral and political lessons on religious principles.

† *Memorabilia*, b. i.

sualism of Plato is as little chargeable on Socrates, as is the practical sensualism of Alcibiades. In the mean time, as the good fame of Socrates is one of the world's heir-looms, and as farther inquiry will tend to exhibit still more clearly the purity of Socrates, we will say a few words more respecting other grounds of objection.

Mr. Mitchell, in his Translation of Aristophanes, has remarked, in answer to the levity and calumny with which Cumberland, the Sir Fretful of his own reputation, has thrown out accusations against the purity of Socrates, that not a word or a syllable to warrant such an attack is to be found in Aristophanes. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the silence of Aristophanes speaks volumes. Would *he* have been silent if he could have said anything against Socrates? May we not take *his* silence as a proof that the purity of Socrates was too well established to be questioned? We cannot give Aristophanes credit for the candour and fairness to which his silence may at first sight appear to entitle him. We cannot receive it as a voluntary tribute, on the part of Aristophanes, to the purity of Socrates. We are more inclined to believe that Aristophanes, in his first representation of the *Clouds*, did make an attack on the purity of Socrates, and that it was part of the cause of the public indignation with which we know that the first representation of the *Clouds* was received. The people of Athens may have had so much admiration of the noble and beautiful in character, or may have set so high a value on the glory reflected by the high character of Socrates upon Athens, as to put down such an attack. Assuredly there was not a temple in Athens whose desecration would have been so great a public dishonour, or so great a public calamity. To have sullied the highest moral achievement that has been wrought, not by the mere intellect, but by an unexampled union of intellect, conscience, and will, as tested by the con-

duct and character of a man who loved and obeyed God, who loved and benefited man, would indeed have desecrated that temple of God in the heart—

Before all temples the upright heart and pure.

Such desecration and impiety might have been borne by the people of Athens without a murmur. But to have robbed Athens of any portion of her glory—and the good fame of Socrates may in happy hour have been so considered—may have roused the indignation of her people. On the other hand, so strong was the Athenian appetite for scandal, and so keen was the sense of the ludicrous in Athens, that had there been such a blot in the moral character of Socrates, we are sure that Aristophanes would have been allowed to hit it. It was because there was no such mark in Socrates that Aristophanes was not allowed to shoot his arrows. Such calumnies are the foul food of those unclean animals who are the scavengers of the night, and might be carried by them to the dens where the rotten offal of society is too often laid up, but the wit of Aristophanes threw a splendid light on *his* malice, and made its falsehood and injustice too glaring to be borne. Such an attack on the part of Aristophanes might be the motive of the peculiar retort made upon him in the speech which Plato puts in his mouth in the *Banquet*, and may also be the reason why Plato, at the close of the *Banquet*, makes Alcibiades enter into so full an exculpation of the purity of Socrates. It appears to require such an attack on the part of Aristophanes to warrant such a retort and such an explanation, and generally such a tone as pervades the *Banquet*, and its introduction in the *Phædrus*. It is, indeed, a strange oversight in Schleiermacher and his followers, that they dwell so much on the compliments paid by Plato to the wit of Aristophanes, that they overlook the contemptuous tone with which his

malicious and unsound character is treated, the first in the *Apology*, and the last in the *Banquet*. And whatever explanation we adopt respecting the entire silence of Aristophanes in the second edition of the *Clouds*, whether we consider it to have been voluntary or compelled, but one inference can be derived from it respecting the purity of Socrates. It is quite certain that if Aristophanes had had anything true to tell or to say against Socrates, he would have said and told it, and he would have been allowed, or rather, he would have been encouraged, to say and to tell it. We therefore repeat, whatever may be thought of our theory, that the silence of Aristophanes, considering his own character, and the character of the Athenians, speaks volumes.

Should it be objected that we have ourselves questioned the moral purity of Socrates by admitting the occasional coarseness of his language, we answer, that as well might it be said that we question the moral soundness of Shakspere, by admitting that the author of Imogen and Desdemona has contrasted them with Cleopatra and Cressida, and that the creator of Prospero and Miranda has given us full-length pictures of Falstaff and Dame Quickly. The great moral physicians of the world must, in order to discharge their office and fulfil their mission, be allowed to study diseases, and describe their symptoms. The boldness, not to say the intentional coarseness of Socrates, when his object was to produce a *reductio ad absurdum* of what was wrong in the language, manners, and customs of his times, must always be taken in connection with his manifestly right object, that is, with the obviously sound principles of which such broad unmistakeable humour was the appropriate vehicle. We can only touch upon this subject; but those who have studied the *Banquets* of Plato and Xenophon, and have seen Socrates in his altitudes, when the mirth

was fast and furious, must have received the same full and clear impression respecting him from the works of two very different artists. Rising from the *Banquet* of Xenophon, they have been ready to exclaim with the father of the beautiful Autolycus—"Socrates! I must declare my opinion, that you are a truly honest man." And however we receive the narrative put into the mouth of Alcibiades in the *Banquet* of Plato, whether as a simple statement of facts, (perfectly credible from the characters of the parties,) or as a general estimate of the principles and practices of each, the inference respecting Socrates is much the same. We see in Alcibiades the cold-blooded seducer, the great practical sophist of his day, the unblushing advocate of Pleasure. On the other hand, we have in Socrates the firm champion of Duty. Doubtless every duty has its pleasure; so it has been mercifully ordained. But assuredly it is not in the moment of fierce temptation, when the passions are in their strength, and reason and conscience are weak, and Will is almost passing over the enemy—it is not then that we dare talk of Pleasure. "O, she is very beautiful," said the ancient counsellors of Priam, "but send her away." In the moment of temptation Socrates nailed, not pleasure, but duty to the mast. When the battle *was* won, and the fight *was* done, his reward was, not pleasure, but happiness. We assert that the view which Socrates took of Pleasure, as we asserted before respecting the view he took of Usefulness, is as scientific as it is practical. We will not consent to a nomenclature which confounds Socrates and Aristippus, Hector and Paris, Andromache and Helen, under one common appellation. We will not consent, that those who uphold and those who undermine families and nations—that those who are striving after duty, and those who are yielding to pleasure—that those who seeks God's approbation, and those

who seek to gratify their own passions—should all be classed under one common name. It is not true that all are equally seeking after pleasure; it is not philosophical to confound the objects of all; it is unsound, religiously, morally, and politically, to put all on a common level. And whatever were the follies and sins of Plato, even the Fifth Book of the *Republic* does not commit this extreme of error. We are about to open to our readers one of the strangest chapters in the history of the human mind; we are about to cross the narrow stream which divides Sensualism from Mysticism, or, to speak more definitely, the Sensualism from the Mysticism of Plato.

THE MYSTICISM OF PLATO*.

THE mystic portion of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, to which we are about to direct the attention of our readers, may be considered as piacular, purifying, and perfecting; being intended by Plato to lead the Guardians of his Republic, by means of an ascetic discipline and a mystic devotion, from bodily pleasure to spiritual contemplation, and ultimately to intellectual perfection. Whether intellectual perfection, founded on moral degradation, can be considered sound, either in theory or practice, may well be doubted; but that the plan for moral degradation in the first part of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* was intended by Plato to be just as real as the system of intellectual perfection which is opened in the latter part of the same Fifth Book of the *Republic*, Plato has put beyond the reach of any reasonable doubt. Let everything that can be urged with a show of truth for Plato be employed in his defence. It may, for example, be said, that, as Plato knew that he could not prevent Sicilian Guardians being Sensualists, and perhaps Socialists, when they entered on their office, that he therefore acquiesced in what he could not prevent:—proposing to *spiritualize* the Guardians of his Republic by the discipline of Pythagoras, just as in the former books he proposed to *moralize* the common citizens by the

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* The works reviewed in this article are—

1 *An Introduction to the Dialogues of Plato*, by W. SEWELL, B.D., late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford.

2 *The Apology of Socrates, the Crito and Part of the Phædo;* with *Notes from* Stallbaum and Schleiermacher's Introductions.

discipline of Socrates. Let what may be received as *the theory of the Republic* be urged so far as it is available for the defence of Plato; but let not his defenders carry their devotion to Plato and their admiration of Platonism, to the extent of denying or frittering away the plain fact, that a sensual socialism is an integral part of Plato's System. Let not a system of reasoning as dangerous to truth as Plato's System must have been to morals, be introduced into the discussions of Protestant scholars*.

What is the plain fact?—that Plato has introduced into his *Republic* a deliberate plan for social sensualism, borrowed, as he tells us in another work, from the Priests of Egypt, and accommodated, or we are much mistaken, to the practices of Sicily. To the desirableness of the plan for a community of women, Plato returns in what is considered the latest of his works, even after he has given up its practicability; introducing into his *Laws* all that he can from his *Republic*, and expressing regret for what he is forced to give up. With this consecutive and concurrent evidence of the *Republic*, *Timæus*, and the *Laws* before us, we consider Plato's Sensualism to be as Platonic, as much intended by Plato to be carried into practice, as it is un-Socratic, directly opposed to sound sense and right principles. Indeed, the line of defence which we have suggested to the admirers of Plato, founded on what may be called the theory of the Republic, urges all that can be said for Plato to the very utmost, in contending that he merely acquiesced in what he could not prevent. In a humorous dialogue, *The Sophist*, (in which what is meant by irony, in the more modern sense of that word, is well exemplified, and may be compared

* See Professor SEWELL's *Horæ Platonicæ*, passim. But see especially the passages in which he would explain away Plato's Sensualism.

with the older meaning of the word, as exhibited in perfection in the *Protagoras*,) Sophistry is defined by means of a logical tree, exhibiting its parentage and connections, and it is pretty clearly made out that Flattery and Cookery are the most reputable of its nearest of kin. If the *history* of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* could be known, we are persuaded that it would prove Plato to have been the master flatterer of his time. The *philosophy* of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* assuredly gives Plato no ordinary title to be considered the master sophist of that sophistic period.

We ask again respecting Plato, what is the plain fact?—That the Sensualism which he borrowed from the Priests of Egypt, is united with the Mysticism which he learnt from the Pythagoreans of Italy, and that he has headed this monster with the morals of Socrates! Such is the *Republic*. May it not have been this sensual mysticism of Plato which Horace has so pleasantly described in his celebrated lines—

> Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
> Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
> Undique collatis membris—

Bearing in mind, that Schleiermacher, (who denies all scientific solidity whatever to the Socrates of Xenophon,) considers the *Republic* of Plato to be the master-piece of science, we will not venture at present on the remainder of the quotation. That Plato was a master-syncratist, that he contrived to join together (for we cannot call it uniting,) the most discordant elements, cannot be denied. And if Syncratism be the definition of Science, Plato was the master-builder Schleiermacher supposes him.

We have selected the Fifth Book of the *Republic* for examination, as being the very pivot on which the system of Plato turns, exhibiting the connection in

Plato's mind between Sensualism and Mysticism. Agreeing with Professor Sewell's statement of Schleiermacher's theory of the *Republic*, (but in a different sense from that intended by Schleiermacher,) we would say that "the *Republic* is the summary of the whole system, and that the Key-stones of the other Dialogues are uniformly let into it," meaning to intimate, not the perfection of science, but the perfection of syncratism, not that the *Republic* is a grand building, but that it is a great labyrinth. And admitting, in this sense, that Schleiermacher is right in considering the *Republic* a Summary of Plato's System, we contend that the Fifth Book of the *Republic* is the Summary of the *Republic*—the clue to the Labyrinth.

Unless this union between Sensualism and Mysticism is clearly understood and kept constantly in view, no justice can be done to Plato. We do not think so lowly of Plato's character as to believe that he would have deliberately proposed a system of sensual socialism, if he had not hoped to keep in check, and in the end to overcome the moral and political evils of sensualism by the dogmas and discipline of mysticism. Nor do we think so meanly of Plato's intellect as to suppose that he would have resorted to the formidable spell of an ascetic mysticism, if he had not considered it the means of laying the bad spirit he had himself evoked. A pandering to the passions was to be expiated by an appeal to the fears. This was very unlike the sincere and truthful philosophy of Socrates. But it is according to the genius of Plato to make these compromises, purchasing by them at once popularity and power at the expense of truth. Thus it is obvious that Plato's own conscience is not satisfied by the shallow reasoning and strong assertions by which he seeks, in the beginning of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, to convince himself of the expediency of the sensual socialism he proposes to institute; and having

done violence to his own reason and conscience by this unprincipled concession, he obtains at that price a recoil which is to raise men to the height of an ascetic mysticism. We repeat our assertion, that unless this Platonic union between Sensualism and Mysticism is thoroughly understood and kept constantly in view, no justice can be done to Plato or his System.

But we find critics who have contrived to shut their own eyes and blind their readers to the reality and actuality of Plato's Sensualism, (speaking of it as at worst an excrescence easily separable from an otherwise excellent system,) proceed to consider Plato's Mysticism as if it were calculated for and had been calculated upon a fair average of human nature. The ethics of the *Republic* appear to them not only the purest and the holiest, but also the perfection of moral science. Such a judgment is neither true in fact nor sound in theory. Plato, having established a sensual socialism, which assuredly is not built on a fair average of human nature, calls to his aid an ascetic mysticism, which assuredly is not a fair average of human duty. He has raised a fiend, and he trusts to a spell to lay it.

But it is time that we proceed from general observations on Plato's System to the details which must warrant what we have said. Let us go on therefore at once to the transition from Sensualism to Mysticism which Plato makes in the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, and which we contend is the clue to Plato's System.

"Speak no more," says the interlocutor in the Fifth Book of the *Republic* to Socrates, "about this Government, as I allow that all these and ten thousand other advantages will belong to it, if it actually exist. But let us endeavour to persuade one another of this—whether it be possible, and in what respect it is so*."

* Taylor's Translation, vol. i., p. 311.

Socrates, who is little better than the mouth-piece of Plato in the *Republic*, after another affectation of unwillingness to speak out, proceeds to sum up the question and give the answer.

"What is that smallest change which, if made, would bring the city to this model of government? And let us chiefly see if this can be effected by the change of one thing—if not, by the change of two—if not that, by the change of the fewest things in number, the smallest in importance. Upon the change then of one thing, I am able, I think, to show that the State can fall into this model of government. But the change is not indeed small, nor easy, yet it is possible. Unless either Philosophers govern cities, or those who are at present called Kings or Governors philosophize genuinely and sufficiently, and these two, the political power and genuine philosophy, unite in one; and till the bulk of those who at present pursue each of them separately are of necessity excluded; there shall be no end to the miseries of cities, nor yet, as I imagine, to those of the human race; nor till then shall ever the Republic, which we have gone over in our reasonings, spring up to possibility and behold the light of the sun*."

We should have thought this plain declaration, supported by the Egyptian authority quoted in the *Timæus*, might satisfy any one that Plato desired to realize his system of sensual socialism. In the Sixth Book of the *Republic* he insists in language still more urgent. "Surely a single Philosopher is sufficient, if he exists and has a city subject to him, to accomplish everything so much disbelieved†." And in the *Laws*, Book Four, Plato still persists that "a tyrant who wishes to change the manners of a city has no occasion either of great labour, or a long time, for the accomplishment of his purpose."

Professor Sewell contends that Plato's theories are

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* Taylor's Translation, vol. i., p. 312. † Ibid., p. 339.

eminently practical, but persists in denying that Plato intended to put this theory in practice. Surely the very reverse of this is the truth, or, in other words, that this most unpractical theory was absolutely intended by Plato to be practised.

Respecting the love of every kind of knowledge, which is to be one of the leading characteristics of the King Philosopher or Philosopher King, as well as of the Guardians of his *Republic*, we have the following illustration in the very manner of Plato. "Will it be needful to remind you, or do you remember it, that when we say of any one 'he loves anything,' if we are speaking with any propriety, he must not appear to love one part of it, and not another, but to have an affection for the whole? It does not become a man who is a lover to forget that all those who are in their bloom sting somehow, and give emotion to one who is amorous*."

Having in the above characteristic passage given a large extent to the knowledge of the philosopher, he proceeds, in a manner even more characteristic of Platonism, to express the kind of knowledge to be aimed at on each subject by the true philosopher.

"He then who accounts some things beautiful, but neither knows *beauty itself*, nor is able to follow if one lead him to the knowledge of it, does he seem to you to live in a dream? Is it not this,—when a man, whether asleep or awake, imagines the similitude of a thing is not the similitude, but is really the thing itself which it resembles? But what now as to him who judges opposite to this—who understands what beauty is itself, and is able to discover both it and such things as participate of it, and neither deems the participant to be beauty, nor beauty to be the participant? whether does such an one seem to you to live awake or in a dream? Perfectly awake, said he. May we

* *Republic*, b. v. Taylor's Translation, vol. i., p. 314.

not then properly call this man's dianoetic perception, as he really *knows*, Knowledge; but that of the other, as he only *opines*, Opinion*?"

We may observe here that all such passages have a two-fold meaning, a philosophical meaning, and a mystical meaning. Stated in the matter-of-fact language of Socrates, or in the logical language of Aristotle, the above passage would have meant, that ideas caught up from individuals are less complete and perfect than ideas collected from so large a number of individuals as fairly to represent a class; and on the other hand, that ideas of essential qualities abstracted from accidental circumstances are definitions of species, and that it is to such knowledge alone that the name science should be given. But such a statement of what he meant by Science, whether expressed in the practical language of Socrates, or in the scientific language of Aristotle, would have suited neither the taste nor the object of Plato. Intending to produce an effect partly mystical and partly philosophical, and that the mysticism should serve as an exterior coating to the philosophy, Plato adopted a language in which the sound sense of Socrates and the sound science of Aristotle are rejected for a vague philosophy enveloped in a splendid mysticism,—a phraseology which, as we shall presently see, led men away from the plain facts of Socrates, and the scientific analysis of Aristotle, into vague and unprofitable abstractions. It is as difficult to do justice to Plato's Philosophy without dispelling his Mysticism, as it is to do justice to Plato's Mysticism without clouding his philosophy. Steering a middle course between the cloudy foam and the hard rock, and endeavouring to lose sight neither of Plato's Mysticism nor Plato's Philosophy, we might express it in the following manner.

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* *Republic*, b. v. Taylor's Translation, vol. i., p. 316.

Plato would have us consider the observed properties of Individuals to be variable and unreal, and subject to the opinions of the many, but that generalized ideas of Classes are unchangeable and real, and objects of knowledge to the few. It is the latter alone, he asserts again and again, who may be said to know *Real-being*, and to have *Knowledge*, (γνωσις); whilst the vulgar, acquainted only with the ever-changing subjects of the senses, have nothing better than *Opinion*. The Philosopher, according to Plato, is he who knows *Real-being;* and the Religious man is he who has ascended in contemplation to the *Divine Mind;* and that this, to use a mystical term, is Knowledge, (γνωσις); and that, to use a philosophic term, is Science, (ἐπίστημη).

It is melancholy, but curious, to observe how the sound views of Socrates were changed by Plato into what may be called a Philosophy of Terms; and how Plato's philosophic followers went on ringing changes on those terms, instead of proceeding after the manner of Socrates, to observe realities, to record facts, to form inductions, and to reason from principles. What Plato really did, was to embody the observations, reasonings, and conclusions of Socrates, (as seen in his conversations with Aristodemus and Euthydemus,) in a peculiar phraseology of a mystic character, so that the philosopher might use it in speculation, and appear to philosophize, without the labour of collecting and comparing facts, whilst the mystic might use it in contemplation, and imagine himself to be absorbed from sense into spirit.

Let us return now with clearer views to the social sensualism of Plato. We will admit that it was Plato's intention ultimately to check sensualism by mysticism. But we cannot admit that facts were likely to realize his intentions, or that they would ever do so in a sound and wholesome manner. Plato's

Guardians were to be provided, by the very constitution of his Republic, with means for an unlimited indulgence of sensualism, and at the same time the checks of individual affection and domestic duty were to be removed; and yet we are told that these Guardians, in virtue of their Philosophy, that is, their Knowledge of Real-being, by philosophic speculation or religious contemplation, were to relinquish the pleasures of sense, and to devote themselves to the pleasures of intellect. Listen to the expectations of Plato, expressed in his own peculiar manner:—"But we know that whoever has his desires vehemently verging to one thing, has them, upon this very account, weaker as to other things. Whoever has his desires running out after learning, and everything of this kind, would be conversant about the pleasure of the soul itself, and would forsake those pleasures which arise from the body, provided he be not a counterfeit, but some real philosopher*."

This is in the very method and style of Plato. Everything is to be vehement and enthusiastic, and, if we may use the expression, spiritually sensual. The Earthly Venus is to be present in all her beauty, but the Heavenly Venus is to unveil her perfections, and mind is to triumph over matter. The great rule of avoiding temptation, in order to be delivered from evil, is to be neglected, or, rather, is to be cast aside, and yet no harm is to come of it. Could the sensual socialism of Plato have been fairly experimented, that is, could such a deliberate outrage have been offered to the laws of God and man, as to employ legislation and institution on the side of folly, vice, and crime, as is implied in the founding of a political community based on the rejection of home virtues, either a whirlwind of fierce passions and wild anarchy would have

* *Republic*, b. vi. Taylor's Translation, vol. i., p. 322.

laid man and his mistaken labours level with the dust, or such a community would have sunk deeper and deeper into utter worthlessness, till they became hewers of wood and drawers of water to better men. But let us examine farther into the Mysticism by which Plato proposed to avert the consequences of Sensualism.

The great distinction which was to separate the Mystic Philosopher from the common herd of men, raising him from ignorance and passion to knowledge and purity, was the contemplation of the Good.

"That, therefore, which imparts truth to what is known, and dispenses the power to him who knows, you may call the Idea of the Good, being the cause of science and of truth, as being known through intellect. And as both these two, knowledge and truth, are so beautiful, when you think that *The Good* is something different, and still more beautiful than these, you still think aright. Science and truth here are as light and sight there, which we rightly judged to be solar-form, but that we were not to think they were the Sun; so here it is right to judge that both these (science and truth) partake of the form of The Good, but to suppose that either of them is The Good, is not right, but The Good is worthy of still greater honour*."

There is much that is true and elevating shadowed out in Plato's view that Intellect is the noblest of all Being, that it is the first emanation from The Good, (that is, in the language of Plato, from The Divinity;) and that, as The Good is above and beyond all Being, so pure Intellect alone (that is, intellect not confined and corrupted by union with matter,) can comprehend the Divine Nature. Whether we look at these speculations in a philosophical or religious point of view, they were indeed noble speculations, and were well fitted to raise men's minds from a gross Poly-

* *Republic*, b. vi. Taylor's Trans'ation, vol. i., p. 345.

theism to such conceptions of the Divine Being as might be least alien from their habits of thought and feeling. But we contend that all that is most sound and real in these views of Plato is implied in the conversations of Socrates with Aristodemus and Euthydemus, parts of which have been quoted in a former article. The very grammar of sound physical observation and generalization, (generalization proceeding on individualization to classification,) may be seen in the *Conversation with Aristodemus;* whilst the very ground-work of sound metaphysical inference, (metaphysics ascending from matter to mind, from body to spirit,) may be seen in the *Conversation with Euthydemus.* There is a tendency to transfer everything that deserves the name of science from Socrates to Plato or to Aristotle. We protest against the injustice of this tendency. We protest against science being confounded either with mysticism or with materialism. We protest against science being disunited from Piety, We cannot allow ourselves to be induced by Plato's mystical phraseology, (by his pretensions to a knowledge of Real Being, and by his half-rhetorical ascent to The Good itself,) to pass to the account of Plato, those common elements of religion and science, which rest the greatest of inferences on the widest of inductions, the clearest inference of a Divine Intellect on the largest observations of a divine system. Let Plato be allowed to have accommodated an ancient and venerable statement of these great truths, to the reasonings of Socrates—but let not the large inductions, clear reasonings, and important conclusions of Socrates, (which, when considered individually and collectively, have all the characters of a great scientific discovery,) be attributed to Plato, on the ground of his having expressed them in an ancient and venerable language*.

* See Professor Burton's Bampton Lectures.

Our objections to the Mysticism of Plato are not merely negative,—are not confined to a denial of its originality, but positive,—a tendency to mystic contemplation in the place of practical piety, a tendency to ascetic mortification in the place of wholesome self-command. Even if evidence of the errors of Plato's followers, the Platonists and Gnostics, were not upon record, such passages as the following would prove to every thinking man the tendencies of Plato's Mysticism.

"The soul then reasons in the most beautiful manner when it is disturbed by nothing belonging to the body; neither by hearing, nor sight, nor pain, nor any pleasure, but subsisting in the most eminent degree, itself by itself, bidding farewell to the body, and as much as possible neither communicating nor being in contact with the body, extends itself towards real being. These things are so. Does not the soul of a philosopher, therefore, in these employments, despise the body in the most eminent degree, and flying from it, seek to become essentially subsisting by itself?—It appears so. But what shall we say about such things as the following? Do we say that the *just itself* is something or nothing?—By Jupiter, we say it is something. And do we not also say, that *the beautiful* and *the good* are each of them something? How is it possible we should not? But did you ever at any time behold any of these with your eyes?—By no means, says he. But did you ever touch upon these with any other corporeal sense? I speak concerning all of them; as for instance about magnitude, health, strength, and, in a word, about the essence of all the rest, and which each truly possesses. Is then the most true nature of these perceived through the ministry of the body? Or rather shall we not say, that whoever among us prepares himself to think dianoetically in the most eminent and accurate manner about each particular object of his speculation, such a one will accede the nearest possible to the knowledge of each?—Entirely so. Will not he, therefore,

accomplish this in the most pure manner, who in the highest degree betakes himself to each through his dianoetical power, neither employing sight in conjunction with the dianoetic energy, nor attracting any other sense together with his reasoning; but who, exercising a dianoetic energy by itself sincere, at the same time endeavours to hunt after everything that has true being subsisting by itself separate and pure; and who in the most eminent degree is liberated from the eyes and ears, and in short from the whole body, as disturbing the soul and not suffering it to acquire truth and wisdom by its conjunction? Will not such a man procure for himself real being, if this can ever be asserted of any one? You speak the truth, Socrates, in a transcendant manner. Is it not necessary therefore from hence, that an opinion of this kind should be present with genuine philosophers, in such a manner that they will speak among themselves as follows? In the consideration of things, this opinion, like a certain path, leads us in conjunction with reason from the vulgar track, that, as long as we are connected with the body, and our soul is contaminated with such an evil, we can never sufficiently obtain the object of our desire; and this object we have asserted to be truth. For the body subjects us to innumerable occupations through necessary aliment, and fills us with love, desire, fear, all various images, and a multitude of trifling concerns; not to mention that if we are invaded by certain diseases, we are hindered by them in our hunting after real being; so that, as it is said, we can never truly and in reality acquire wisdom through the body. For nothing else but the body and its desires cause wars, seditions, and contests of every kind: for all wars arise through the possession of wealth; and we are compelled to acquire riches through the body becoming subservient to its cultivation; so that on all these accounts we have no leisure for the exercise of philosophy. But this is the extremity of all evil, that if at any time we are at leisure from its attendance, and betake ourselves to the speculation of any thing, then invading us in all sides in our investigations, it causes agita-

tions and tumults, and so vehemently impels us, that we are not able through its presence to perceive the truth; but it is in reality demonstrated to us, that if we are designed to know anything purely, we must be liberated from the body, and behold things with the soul itself. And then, as it appears, we shall obtain the object of our desires, and of which we profess ourselves lovers, viz., wisdom, when we are dead, as our discourse evinces, but by no means while we are alive: for if we know nothing purely in conjunction with the body, one of these two consequences must ensue, either that we can never possess knowledge, or that we must obtain it after death; for then the soul will subsist apart by itself, separate from the body, as it appears we shall approach in the nearest manner possible to knowledge if in the most eminent degree we have no association with the body, nor any communication with it, (except what the greatest necessity requires,) nor are filled with its nature, but purify ourselves from its defiling connexion*, till Divinity itself dissolves our bond. And thus being pure and liberated from the madness of the body, it is proper to believe that we shall then associate with others who are similarly pure, and shall through ourselves know everything genuine and sincere: and this perhaps is the truth itself; for it is by no means lawful that the pure should be touched by that which is impure†."

Milton in the free exercise of his noble art tells us of

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* Plato's Theory of Ghosts ("making night hideous") is connected with these mystic views of separating the soul from the body by an ascetic discipline and a divine contemplation. Plato tells us that the souls of those who have not thus purified themselves, "wander about monuments and tombs; about which indeed certain shadowy phantoms of the soul appear, being the images produced by such souls as have not been purely liberated from the body, but which participate of the visible nature, and on this account become visible, and are compelled to wander about such places; by these means suffering the punishment of their former conduct, which was evil; and they are compelled thus to wander, till, through the desire of a corporeal nature which attends them, they are again bound to a body."—*Phædon.*

† See *Phædon.* Taylor's Translation, vol. iv., p. 266.

Spare Fast that oft with Gods does diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.

But the tone of ascetic mortification in the long passage we have just quoted from the *Phædon* of Plato reminds us more of Heloise in the cloister or of La Valière at the confessional. Or we may liken such eulogy of ascetic mortification and mystic contemplation written by the author of the sensual socialism of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, to a pyramid which, taking a broad hold upon the earth at its base, shoots a bare and narrow point high up into the cold thin air. In the ascetic mysticism of Plato there is a tone of exaggeration, not to say insincerity, how unlike the simple earnestness with which Socrates speaks of the usefulness, nobleness, and happiness of self-command. Plato was not a man to relinquish a pleasure or to incur a pain on mystic or ascetic motives, for his own practice verged more to the indolence of Epicurus, not to say the indulgence of Aristippus, than to the rigid rule of the Stoics, though he affected the enthusiastic tone of Pythagoras. The half-mystic half-ascetic language of Plato, though it implied little more than exaggeration of sentiment, led his philosophic followers, the Platonists, and his religious followers, the Gnostics, into speculative and practical absurdities, which he himself never contemplated.

It appears probable that Aristotle had the exaggerations of Plato distinctly before him when he made the mean between excess and defect, (as settled by right reason,) the measure of virtue and happiness, and when he spoke of the theoretical life as something above and beyond our present state of being, and when after his acute but severe analysis of the abstract-idea, the thing-itself of Plato, he concludes the knowledge of it to be of no practical use whatever. But even the piercing and comprehensive

intellect of Aristotle could not foresee the religious and moral and political mischief which was to result from the ascetic mysticism of Plato. This is the unacknowledged parentage of hermits and friars, monks and nuns, vigils and fastings, with those vows of virginity and cœlibacy so often connected with a shameless neglect of chastity and the marriage vow. That these strange unions of opposite errors may be traced through Gnostic corruptions of Christianity ultimately to Plato, is a fact, equally important and curious, for the proof of which we must refer our readers to Dr. Burton's learned work on the *Heresies of the Apostolic Age.*

Indeed, if we desire to form a clear idea of the Mysticism of Plato, both as to its motives and its consequences, we must study it in many such passages as those we have last quoted, but more especially in the *Republic* and the *Phædon.* Thence we must pursue the course of Mysticism through the philosophic writings of the Alexandrian Platonists to the mystical dogmas of the Gnostic sects. The materials for this inquiry are collected in Dr. Burton's Bampton Lectures, and in his Notes, from the various sources to which he refers his readers. Thence we may descend the stream of error to the mystic reveries and ascetic practices of the monastery and the nunnery, and to their influence, religious, moral, and political, on society during the middle ages. It is not till we have contemplated the Mysticism of Plato in all these developments, that we can have an idea of the amount of mischief which Plato's exaggerations of sentiment and language have entailed upon the world. Nor is it till we have compared the Mysticism and Asceticism of Plato with the Piety and Self-command of Socrates, both in principle and practice, both in motive and consequence, that we shall understand and feel all the difference between the Philosophy of Socrates and *the Mysticism* of Plato.

According to Plato's theory, the body being evil, there is no action of the body that is not evil. On the other hand, the soul being pure, the actions of the soul, when separated from the body, are all pure. *Here* there is no limit to the purity of contemplation; *there* there is no limit to the impurity of action. With such a theory, a burning climate, a sensual body, and a vehement imagination, we see no other limit to enthusiasm than the powers of endurance in the body, and of excitement in the mind. The hermit, the pilgrim, the faquir, the friar, the monk, may alone, or in company, carry their corporeal mortifications, and their mental excitements, to the utmost extent of what nature can sustain. On the other hand, the people may be led to reverence what they can only in a small degree imitate; they may be brought to submit to the unlimited power of such holy men; and may, with a little farther management, be induced to believe that the nothingness of their own virtue is thus eked out. It is strange to trace, (as Dr. Burton has done in his Lectures,) so many evils to a follower of Socrates. It is strange to see how different is the Philosophy of Socrates from the Mysticism of Plato, whether the comparison be made as to religion, morals, or politics, as to the individual, the family, or the state. How can it be asserted, for a moment, that Plato was the King of Philosophers, and Socrates a bare-footed friar given to Mysticism?

One of the most severe charges we must urge against Plato is, that the purest and noblest sayings of Socrates were not safe from his abuse. Socrates used a proverbial expression, "the property of friends is common," to describe the terms on which he lived with his friends. As he never received money for his lessons, (doubtless in order to draw a distinction between the motives and objects of the real Philosopher, and of the mercenary Sophist and Rhetorician,) he left it to

the justice and gratitude of his richer friends to acknowledge the great benefits they received from his instructions, often by acts of kindness done to mutual friends who had fallen into distress. But to what kind of community did Plato prostitute this pure and noble expression of Socrates' high-minded and kind-hearted intercourse with his friends?

What reception Plato's social-sensualism would have met from Socrates may be gathered from the first and second books of the *Memorabilia*. The second book ought to open with the chapter on filial affection and duty, (we need scarcely say how much it is at variance with Plato's plan for dissolving connubial, parental, and filial ties at a blow,) as the first book should have closed with the Apologue of the *Choice of Hercules*. Socrates proceeds from parental and filial affections and duties to those which subsist between brothers, and thence to those which subsist between friends. It is not till these first ties and primary duties have been thoroughly considered, that he proceeds to the interests and duties, private and public, which subsist between fellow-citizens. Here is a system of obligation founded on the domestic hearth, and shooting up from thence with the roof-tree to the support and union of the whole building. Such a system could have nothing in common with Plato's theory.

It would seem to have required a perversion just as unscrupulous as that we have noticed respecting the common property of friends, to extract anything ignoble or impure from the manner in which Socrates speaks of love and friendship. "Take courage, Critobulus. Make yourself, in the first place, a virtuous man, and then boldly set yourself to gain the affection of the virtuous; and this is a chace wherein I may be able to assist you, being myself much inclined to love. Now, whenever I conceive an

affection for any, I rest not till it becomes reciprocal; but borne forward by the most ardent inclination, I strive to make my company equally desirable." The lessons which this great master of the art of love gives to Critobulus on the value of friends, the choosing of friends, the attaching of friends, the serving and preserving of friends, and lastly, the uniting of friends for the common good, might well deserve to be quoted at length; but we must be content to quote only the precept with which the lesson is concluded:—"The surest as the shortest way to make yourself beloved and honoured, is to be indeed the man you wish to appear*."

The Love of Socrates was equally pure and warm, individual and catholic, firm and free, ennobling and attaching. His heartiness, frankness, and pleasantry; his power of convincing his friends of their faults, and then of converting them to sounder principles and conduct; his extraordinary power of stimulating the lukewarm, and encouraging the earnest; and, above all, his way of founding the most practical conduct on the highest motives, must all be studied in a variety of details before they can be adequately comprehended. Were we to attempt quotation, we should be embarrassed with all the treasures of Socrates' love—love for his friends, love for his country, love for his species—that noble love which flows in a clear pure stream in the *Conversations* of Xenophon, but glows with equal light and warmth in those admirable *Socratic Dialogues* of Plato, (so plainly distinguishable from the *Platonic Monologues*,) in which we seem to catch the very tone and manner, nay the very gesture and look of Socrates, and see that Silenus face beaming, not only with wit and humour, sense and feeling, but with a spirit and a grace which still make the reader

* *Memorabilia*, b. ii. c. 6.

of Plato hang on the lips of Socrates through the live-long night.

Were we asked for some account of the fascination of Socrates' manner, not only on his hearers but his readers, (though doubtless it was exercised by the living Socrates in a far more wonderful degree,) we think we should be right, and we speak after much observation of the characteristics of that delightful manner, in attributing much of its power to that extraordinary union of love and purity—love to God and love of man, purity from sensual passion and purity from selfish interest—which were the foundations of his character, and the motives of his conduct.

In what way did the moral purity of Socrates contribute to a manner, which we read and feel to have been so singularly attractive and impressive? We answer, that a large portion of the intellectual elasticity and moral clearness which are so conspicuous in the conversation and manner of Socrates, were attributable to his moral purity. When to the light of his purity we add the warmth of his benevolence, we seem to give no unsatisfactory account of that charming pleasantry which won all hearts. Should we be required to illustrate our remarks by example, we would refer to two classes of the *Socratic Dialogues*, his conversations with young and promising pupils, and his communings, if we may use the expression, with his God; and above all, we would refer to the conversations of Socrates, when at the close of his long, useful, and happy life, he was drawing near to the source of purity and love. Those who have dwelt on the simplicity, purity, and goodness of Socrates, as seen in the *Crito* and the *latter part* of the *Phædo*, must have felt the truth of what we have asserted. Who does not remember the incident of the gaoler's love and admiration for Socrates, and the strange mixture of joy and grief, of tears and smiles, with which his followers bade him farewell.

If manner be too often employed to deceive, not only others but ourselves; if the perfect actor comes, not only into the presence of other men, but into his own presence, and, strange to tell, into the very presence of his God, trusting to the mask of a fictitious and unreal character,—yet, on the other hand, there is a look and a gesture, a tone and a manner, in comparison with which the demonstrations of the mathematician, and the experiment of the man of science, are full of doubt and disbelief. This evidence is neither physical nor intellectual, but strictly a *moral* evidence. It is seen in the look and heard in the voice, and appears in the gesture. We require no other evidence of the truthfulness of Socrates than his manner. We cannot convey our idea of that manner more clearly than by negatives. It is *not* the enthusiastic manner of Plato. It is *not* the cold manner of Aristotle. In reading whatever is genuinely Socratic, we seem to feel the truth of Cicero's remark,—"Quod verum, simplex, sincerumque sit, id esse naturæ hominis aptissimum." It was the real manner of Socrates; for though Plato has admirably copied it in the *Socratic Dialogues*, the original is plain to be seen in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon. It cannot be defined. It must be *felt* in order to be understood.

We have already offered some explanation of the remarkable fact, that Socrates has left us nothing upon the characters and duties of women, resigning to his friend Euripides the honour of that hopeless and dangerous attempt. Indeed, the evidence from facts is plain, that till some great change was wrought in Religion, such as might open a way to great changes in principles, customs, and manners, nay in language itself, and above all in the condition of women, nothing great or good, nothing pure or holy, could be hoped from the domestic hearth, but instead of Home being the centre of "love, joy, peace," the relation

between the sexes must have continued a source of great evil. Assuredly Plato's community of women could not be the cure of that fearful evil, of which it was in fact the acknowledgment. It was far too great an evil to be affected by the purity and the affection of Euripides. What has been the cure of that great evil? We propose to follow out the inquiry in our next Essay.

ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY*.

It cannot be expected, in a work of this nature, and of the size to which it is limited, that we should enter into an historical, critical, or even popular account of Greek Philosophy; nor that the subject, however interesting in itself, should be introduced at all, farther than will minister to the right understanding and reception of scriptural truth. In our articles on Gnosticism and the Logos we have shown that a knowledge of Greek Philosophy throws light on one of the most recondite doctrines of Christianity, bringing us acquainted with expressions and opinions current throughout the civilized world during the rise and progress of Christianity, and showing how these modes of expression came to be adopted by the first converts to Christianity, and afterwards to be employed by St. John in his Gospel†. Indeed, if a knowledge

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* The following Essay, though written for the pages of the *Biblical Cyclopædia*, bears so immediately upon the question proposed at the conclusion of the preceding Essay, that it appears to require little alteration or addition to fit it for its present place. I beg to acknowledge the liberality of Mr. Kitto, the editor of the *Biblical Cyclopædia*, in allowing me to reprint this article on Greek Philosophy from his valuable work. It may be taken as a Review (rather excursive) of the following works:—

1 *An Inquiry into the Heresies of the Apostolic Age*, in Eight Sermons, preached before the University of Oxford at a Lecture founded by the Rev. John Bampton, M.A., by the Rev. Edward Burton, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church.

2 The Articles entitled *Gnosticism*, *Logos*, *and Greek Philosophy* in the *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, edited by John Kitto, editor of the *Pictorial Bible*, &c. &c.

† The subject is treated at large by Professor Burton in his Bampton Lectures. An outline of some parts of the evidence is given in the article *Gnosticism*, and a brief statement of Professor Burton's view will be found in the article *Logos*. But it is to Professor Burton's learned and valuable work, that we beg to refer our readers.

of the sacrificial language of the Jews throws light upon Christ's mission, in so far as its object was to put an end to the numerous sacrifices and ceremonial ministrations of the Jewish Priesthood, it is not less evident that a knowledge of the philosophical language of the Greeks will throw light upon the first use amongst the Christian converts, and upon the subsequent adoption by St. John into his Gospel, and by St. Paul into his Epistles, of remarkable language employed to describe the mission and the Nature of Christ. But not only may a knowledge of ancient learning, and more especially of ancient philosophy, supply valuable assistance for the better understanding of Christian Doctrines; but we may derive from such knowledge the fullest and clearest proofs of the benefit conferred by Christianity on the progress of principle and civilization: and, we may add, that we have a direct warrant from St. Paul to employ ancient learning, and more especially Greek Philosophy, in rendering to the Christian Religion the services we have specified.

Perhaps there does not occur in the Christian Record a more striking and important passage than that which we shall quote from the Epistle to the Romans: the Epistle which for its general and paramount interest, (being equally addressed to Gentile, Jew, and Christian,) has been placed first of the Epistles. Indeed, the Epistle to the Romans proves by the plainest facts that Christianity was absolutely necessary for the removal of the most intolerable evils that ever oppressed the world. The Apostle of the Gentiles, having in the opening chapter given a fearful picture of the vices and crimes of Rome, the truth of which is fully established by the writings of Tacitus and Suetonius, Martial and the Roman Satirists; (and in the next chapter he charges the same neglect of moral duty, under pretence of a sounder faith, upon the Jews, chap. ii. v. 17,) proceeds to address Gentile

and Jew in a strain of manly and noble eloquence, which, if we estimate the magnitude of the interests, individual and domestic, private and public, religious, moral, and political, which then depended and still depends on the understanding and reception of Christianity in its truth and power, must be allowed to leave every other example of reasoning and eloquence far behind it. The words of St. Paul, following his exposure of the wickedness of Rome, (of heathen vices as the direct consequences of heathen superstitions*,) are these:—

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified†."

As every word of this passage bears closely on the object of our present article, (and we may add, on the

* See Romans, chap. i. verses 21 and 24, 25 and 26, 28 and 29, &c.
† *Ibid.*, chap ii. verse 3.

question which we have asked at the close of our last Essay,) we will make no apology for having quoted it at length. The Christian minister has in his spiritual armoury no weapon of keener edge or of finer temper, whether for laying bare the hidden secrets of the heart, or for unfolding the mystery of salvation in Jesus Christ. What man, however ignorant, careless, or vicious he may be, does not find his inmost conscience respond to the words, "and thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" What resister of the truth, whether by open scoffing or secret disobedience, does not find himself pricked to the heart by the words "them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth?" What sanctimonious hypocrite, rigid dogmatist, or fierce persecutor does not find the hollowness and perilousness of his pretence in the words, "not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified?" What catholic-minded, sincere-hearted, rightly-conducted Christian does not find comfort in the words, "but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good?" What man fainting by the way will not take courage from the words, "to those who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life?" What Antinomian professor of faith, as an excuse for disobedience, does not feel his hope fail him as he reads the words, "not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified,"—or should he attempt to escape the plain meaning of the passage by the plea that he is neither Jew nor Gentile, how will he escape from words addressed in the same spirit of making obedience the test of faith—"What shall we say then? Shall *we* continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid—Know ye not that to

whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Lastly, who does not feel his faith, hope, and charity enlarged, as he reads the following catholic extension of justice and mercy and truth published by the Apostle to the Gentiles—"Glory, and honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

The Protestant will not fail to remark that the preaching of St. Paul exhibits a far more catholic spirit than the narrower and more sectarian views of St. Peter. Indeed, the word Catholic might with much greater fitness be applied to the teaching of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, than to the teaching of the apostle whose Judaizing spirit sought to narrow the grace of God, and to impose the yoke of the ceremonial law, and to keep up the power of the priesthood. And if any one of the Apostles is to be selected as the patron saint of the whole Catholic Church, surely that Apostle should be the great Apostle to the Gentiles. Or, if the Church of Rome claims to be the Catholic Church, there seems an especial reason for her adopting the really catholic views of Christianity which were addressed by St. Paul to the Romans.

We have found it impossible to quote the above striking and important passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans without being led into a few remarks upon its general scope and meaning. But the view on which we would especially insist, as the subject of our present article, is, that theologians have in this passage, as they have in many other passages closely connected with it, a warrant for bringing ancient history, literature, and philosophy, and especially the Philosophy of Greece, to bear upon the rise and progress, the object and end of Christianity. For assu-

redly every passage in the New Testament which relates to the superstition of the Gentiles, the immoralities of the Gentiles, the opinions of the Gentiles, and the knowledge of the Gentiles, must derive evidence and explanation from Gentile history, literature, and philosophy; just as passages which have reference to the Jews must derive evidence and explanation from Jewish History, Literature, and Philosophy. The latter is more especially the case with passages in the New Testament, which relate to the termination of sacrifice and the priesthood; whilst the former applies more especially to passages which relate to the Word of God and the Christian Ministry. It might, indeed, be supposed from the opinions and conduct of some Christians in all ages, (who have all but quoted their ignorance in proof of the soundness of their faith,) that the oft-quoted words of the learned, as well as pious, Apostle to the Gentiles, "after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*," contained a warrant, on the one hand, for preaching without knowledge, and, on the other hand, for faith without obedience. If we inquire into the real meaning of those remarkable words, we shall find it closely connected with our present inquiry, and directly opposed to the unlearned and unwise meaning which has been deduced from it, by what may be called the pride of ignorance, as a warrant for presumption. Indeed, it is not a little remarkable, that few passages require more real learning and true wisdom for their sound interpretation, than that which has been so often and so hastily quoted as a warrant for a contempt of all learning. Let us endeavour to understand the real meaning of the passage:

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* 1 Corinthians c. i, v. 12.

and in order to do so let us return to our former quotation.

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the necessity of a great religious change, preparatory to a great moral change—a change of faith and worship, preparatory to a change in principles and conduct, is fully and plainly made out. The Apostle to the Gentiles was about to build upon the Jewish Scriptures, but for the edification of the whole world, a purer faith and a more reasonable service than Jew or Gentile had yet known. The moral ruin of the Jewish Temple had already taken place—"Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God; and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes; which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law;—Thou therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, doest thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, doest thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, doest thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God*?" On the other hand, the ruins of Gentile temples, Egyptian, and Greek, and Roman, still witness the truth of St. Paul's words to the same effect—"When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made

* Romans c. ii, v. 21.

like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness."

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this lesson, or the plainness of the evidence; the *lesson*, that corruption of religion implies corruption of morals; the *evidence*, the phenomena of the civilized world at that great period of history. Respecting the religious and moral corruptions of the Jews at that period, our present argument does not require us to say more. Let us then turn to the corruptions of the Heathens. Those who are acquainted with the progressively-increasing profligacy of the heathen world, as exhibited in Greek and Roman history and literature, are aware that the picture drawn by St. Paul is fully borne out by facts. The sanctity and purity of the domestic hearth were, as we have shown in a former Essay, undermined; the roof-tree virtues, which are a nation's strength, had given way; and the vast edifice of Greek science and Roman power was tottering to its fall. That this is no exaggerated statement, we appeal to Plato, Aristophanes, and Lucian, to Tacitus, Martial, Ovid, and the Roman Satirists. Indeed, the summary given by the Roman Historian of a somewhat earlier period, points to the same conclusion:—"Labente deinde paulatim disciplinâ, velut desidentes primo mores sequatur animo: deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint; tum ire cœperint præcipites; donec ad hæc tempora, quibus nec vitia nostra nec remedia pati possumus, perventum est." In that state of unprinciple and indiscipline, Roman civilization was unable to resist the attacks her vices had provoked. The close connection between licentiousness and blood-guiltiness was never so strikingly exhibited, nor was the retribution provoked ever so fearful, as that which the poet has fully described by one example:—

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims before him—he is gone,
E'er ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he their sire
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

What a picture of licentiousness and blood-guiltiness is that vast amphitheatre! Woman must have lost all the best attributes of her nature and her character before she could sit and applaud at such a scene. If, casting from us every poor and petty jealousy, sexual and sectarian and philosophical, we contrast *that* scene of woman's debasement with those happier scenes where thousands of our countrywomen have met in hall and temple, and even in the open air, to give freedom to the slave, and remember that *these* are as certainly direct consequences of Christianity, as those were direct consequences of heathen superstition, (unless, indeed, St. Paul's unanswerable argument, and the concurrent testimony of ancient and modern history, are false instead of true,) assuredly we have before us proofs of a great religious and moral and political advance in the situation and

character of women; and the cause, as well as the effect, is plainly before us.

We speak of a great and notorious fact, when we say that there was not a hope that sanctity, and purity, and love would be restored to the character of woman, and by her means to the domestic hearth,—and by the domestic hearth to the councils of legislators, and the acts of nations,—that there was not a hope that woman would resume, or rather, would assume, her true position in society, till heathen superstitions and heathen rites were superseded by a holier faith and a purer worship. Nor is the fact less notorious or less important, that it was the Religion of Christ which, by superseding those heathen superstitions and heathen rites by a holier faith and a purer worship, did, at the same time, and as a direct consequence, raise woman to her true position in society. It is, we repeat, matter of fact that the Religion of Christ restored Sanctity, and Purity, and Love to the domestic hearth, making those three Christian Graces, if we may be allowed that expression, the best ornaments of the female character, and giving Christian Love and Christian Charity an influence which has at once softened and purified the heart. And, were it possible that the ill-directed ingenuity which has laboured for the downfall of Religion on the Continent should get footing in this country, we persuade ourselves that it would be resisted effectually by our countrywomen, who might plead that the best graces of their character,—graces which have made them eminent amongst the women of Europe, need we add, of the world,—their sanctity, their purity, and their affection, have been inspired and disciplined and directed by the Religion of Christ. Now, as there cannot be a greater evil to society than the corruption of women, nor a greater good than female virtue, so there cannot be a more important evidence respecting the

value of Christianity in the progress of civilization, than this proof which Ancient History and Literature supply; first, of the moral degradation produced by Heathen Superstition; and, secondly, of the moral cure wrought by Christianity.

In the Epistle to the Romans, it is the object of St. Paul to prove, both to Jew and Gentile, that the moral world, though it had the Law of Moses and the Philosophy of Greece, was so sunk in superstition, sin, and crime, that the whole body of society was corrupt, and that there was not a hope of cure till the sources of corruption, whether in the pharisaical observances of the Jew, or in the profligate superstitions of the Gentile, were superseded by a purer faith and a sounder worship. St. Paul contends that neither the Law of Moses, nor the Philosophy of Greece was able to raise Jew or Gentile from the bondage of sin and death; and he challenges the religious and the moral, and, we may add, the political facts of those times to prove the truth of his assertion. His object was not to depreciate either the Mosaic Law or the Greek Philosophy, the authority of the one, or the morality of the other, but to show that so long as the pharisaical observances of the Jew, and the profligate superstitions of the Gentile remained in force, neither Religion nor Philosophy could prevent the world sinking deeper and deeper into pollution. The Apostle to the Gentiles allows that "they knew God," but he contends that "they glorified Him not as God;" and, therefore, he asserts, "God gave them up to lasciviousness;" he allows, "that some amongst them, though they had not the Law, did by nature the things contained in the Law," but he contends that the principles and conduct of such men was but an oasis in the midst of a howling wilderness, for that the mass of men were given up "to vile affections."

It is impossible to deny that in the Greek Philo-

sophy we find the rise and progress of a speculative knowledge of God of no common character or measure; but it is just as impossible to deny that though the nations, amongst which a few such burning and shining lights had arisen, might be said "to know God," it was notorious that "they glorified Him not as God." It is by following out St. Paul's argument, and by examining the truth of his statements, that we feel all the necessity of an abolition of heathen superstitions, and the establishing of a better faith, before sound principles and right conduct could be understood and practised by the mass of mankind, though they had been conceived by a few philosophers.

If to this evidence of the necessity of a change of faith and worship for the salvation of the ancient world, proving that without such change the religious and moral and political reformations which were required, were quite unattainable,—if, to this evidence, we add proofs of the religious, moral, and political reformation which Christianity actually introduced,—and if, to this two-fold evidence respecting the necessity of a change of faith, and the efficacy of the change to Christianity, we add the evidence of the actual effects of Christianity in our own times, freedom to the slave, knowledge to the ignorant, and civilization to the heathen, (for though these benefits have been wrought by politicians, it has been in compliance with a motive and a zeal which assuredly were not supplied by worldly wisdom or worldly justice,)—and if, to this three-fold evidence, we add present indications, that still higher religious and moral and political effects will be wrought out by Christianity—we have in this four-fold evidence a body of proof respecting the usefulness of Christianity exactly fitted for the wants of the time.

What we propose is a *question of fact* respecting the civilization of the world. Is it not matter of fact that

the religious and moral foundations of the world were worn out, when Christianity came to renew them on another basis? We are not speaking of a few

Rari nantes in gurgite vasto,

struggling in that moral deluge, but of the principles and practices of the mass of mankind. Granting that the Philosophy of Socrates contained no stinted measure of virtue and happiness, yet the question presents itself, how was it to be made available to the millions that were perishing? We are not asking who was in fault, princes or priests, statesmen or people, the higher, the middle, or the lower orders; but we ask about a matter of fact, could the principles of Socrates be applied for the salvation of the world? We have tried the question on one issue, on the character and position of woman as it influenced society; but it might have been tried on many others. Pure and noble as is the morality of Socrates, he neither did, nor could, in the midst of such wide and deep corruption, imagine the blessings of a Christian Home. Yet it was in the midst of those superstitions and immoralities, that the Religion of Christ, the Religion of Home, dawned upon the world; and we may add that one of the first-fruits of Christianity was the sanctity and purity of Christian Marriage—the sanctity and purity of Christian Home.

We know not what political rights have been claimed for woman, both in our own days and in the times of Plato, rights which would take woman out of her appropriate sphere, open to her a scene of action for which she is least fitted, and make her the rival, instead of the help-meet for man. Who does not see that to the Christian Wife and the Christian mother, (and in a less, but still in a large degree, to the Christian Daughter and the Christian Sister,) is intrusted the guardianship of society in childhood and in youth, and a large influence on its manhood; and that

it is thus that it is in the power of woman to affect, with deep, wholesome, and permanent influence, the religion and morals, the laws and institutions, the manners and customs of her country, even in the present, and still more in the next generation. Is the power and the accountableness too little or too great, that the advocates of woman, following some of the steps of Plato, desire to exchange it for a sphere of action for which woman (we are speaking of the rule, not of a few exceptions,) is not fitted, in which she would exchange both her proper character and proper influence for busy intrigues, vain display, empty triumphs, and real ridicule?

But to return to better recollections and better hopes. The Christian Religion raised woman from the position of a slave or a favourite to that of an equal and a friend,—opening the door of her prison-house to all the interests, duties, and pleasures of Home. We have taken the *Iliad* as the standard of that half-Asiatic civilization which passed from Asia into Greece; in which the wife may be said to have lost ground by ceasing to have power over the mistress, whilst the mistress gained the advantage of greater liberty, and superior accomplishments, both of mind and body, in the struggle with her rival. If we take Milton as our standard of the advance in Religion, Morals, and Manners, which the Religion of Christ effected, we may compare the Epic of the Ancient World with the Epic of the Modern World, in estimating the great change that the Religion of Christ effected in the position of woman, and consequently in civilization. It may, however, be contended that Milton rather marks the advance of Protestantism beyond Romanism, and that it is between Dante and Homer, and not between Milton and Homer, that the comparison must be made, in order to show the superiority of Romanism over Heathenism. If this be so,

we may afterwards proceed to a comparison of Homer and Milton for an estimate of the still greater superiority which Protestant Christianity has over Heathen Superstition, both as relates to the position of woman in society—to the sanctity, purity, and love of home—and to all the consequences of that change on civilization. But we must remember when we speak of the religion and morals of Homer, and of their effects upon the character and position of woman, and upon home, and upon the world, that the account is closed, and the book is made up. On the other hand, we must remember that only an incomplete estimate can yet be made of the blessings, (religious, moral, and, we may add, political,) which the Religion of Christ still opens to those who receive it in spirit and in truth; for the book is not yet closed, nor the account made up.

Who may estimate all the effects which a Christian and English Home has breathed into our Literature, and through our literature into our feelings and principles, as home-virtues and home-happiness have been presented to us by Milton or Cowper, Shakspere or Scott? Who may estimate all the effects of the many pure and beautiful writings of our countrywomen, who have derived so much of their inspiration, directly or indirectly, from a Christian English Home? Let us be allowed to quote, somewhat largely, from a Poet of our own time, whose verses breathe a spirit which proves that the Religion of Christ is indeed the Religion of Home.

MORNING.

"His compassions fail not: they are new every morning."

Hues of the rich unfolding morn,
That ere the glorious sun be born,
By some soft touch invisible
Around his path are taught to swell;

Thou rustling breeze so fresh and gay,
That dancest forth at opening day,
And brushing by with joyous wing,
Wakenest each little leaf to sing;

Ye frequent clouds of dewy steam,
By which deep grove and tangled stream
Pay, for soft rains in season given,
Their tribute to the genial heaven;

Why waste your treasures of delight,
Upon our thankless, joyless sight;
Who day by day to sin awake
Seldom of Heaven and you partake?

Oh, timely happy, timely wise,
Hearts that with rising morn arise!
Eyes that the beam celestial view,
Which evermore makes all things new.

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life, and power, and thought.

New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

If in our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.

Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of Heaven in each we see,
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

As for some dear familiar strain
Untired we ask, and ask again,
Ever, in its melodious store,
Finding a spell unheard before;

Such is the bliss of souls serene,
When they have sworn, and steadfast mean,
Counting the cost, in all to espy
Their God, in all themselves deny.

Oh could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise,
How would our hearts with wisdom talk,
Along Life's dullest, dreariest walk.

We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbour and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we need to ask;—
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God.

Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go—
The secret this of Rest below.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love,
Fit us for perfect Rest above;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

Towards the close of these beautiful verses there is a tone of—what shall we call it?—Quietism, with which we can hardly go along, and which, if we may use the expression, appears to us more feminine than manly. And we think we apprehend the tone of public principle, ecclesiastical and civil, in which such Quietism

might end. But in speaking of the sanctity, the purity, and the love which breathe through these verses, the home-affections, and home-duties, and home-happiness which they inculcate, our feeling is unmixed admiration. We desire to impress upon our own feelings, thoughts, actions, and conduct the truth and beauty of this home-lesson. Home might be made the best, as well as the first scene of discipline, principle, and happiness. The individual is too narrow, and society is too wide a basis. The individual must indeed discipline himself or herself, or the harmony of the family is broken. But it is in the family, at Home, that the feelings and principles must be learned and practised which may hallow and purify and soften what is too often the levity and worldliness and hard-heartedness of society. Let us speak of manners as an indication of principles. A keen observer has said, "magna sæpe intelligamus ex parvis,—ex occulorum obtutu, ex superciliorum aut remissione aut contractione, ex mœstitiâ, ex hilaritate, ex risu, ex locutione, ex reticentiâ, ex contentione vocis et submissione, ex cæteris similibus." Respecting all these things, numerous and minute, but superficial rules may be accurately taught, so that consummate art of manner, the whitening of a sepulchre, may lay a fair outside on inward rottenness. But that is not religious principle; nor is that the discipline of home; for these cause the stream to be clear by making the fountain pure. With what truth and beauty has the poet expressed this,—

> If in our daily course our mind
> Be set to hallow all we find,
> New treasures still of countless price
> God will provide for sacrifice.

The greatest difference between one person and another, is the regulation of feeling, action, and conduct, upon religious principle, or the leaving these to

the pleasure of the individual or the mere custom of society. But if religious principle may be embodied in home discipline, who can estimate the effects of sanctity, purity, and affection, as they influence infancy and childhood, youth and manhood and age, or, in one word, as they influence Home? Or who may calculate the effect of Home, when so influenced, upon society and the world?

Let us remind our readers yet once again of a striking and important fact—that it was the Religion of Christ which restored, or rather gave, to the domestic hearth the sanctity and purity which Heathen Superstition and Heathen Vices had driven away; for though Philosophy pointed out and bewailed, it could not remedy that deep corruption. And it is the Religion of Christ, hallowing the homeward tendencies of our Teutonic Race, which has bestowed on us the blessings of an English Home; and we believe that, on the preservation of this Palladium, our sound national character, our well-ordered liberty, and our individual happiness all depend.

Do not Religion and Philosophy, when rightly understood, speak the same great truths, though in different languages? Distinguish Religion from Superstition, and Philosophy from Sophistry, and are not Religion and Philosophy in clear accord? Do not Religion and Philosophy support one another, and strengthen one another against their common enemies —scepticism producing anarchy, and vice producing misery? Against scepticism and anarchy, vice and misery, are not the Will of God and the reason of man, when rightly understood, found to be united? Shall we then undervalue either Religion or Philosophy? or shall we not do our utmost to show the harmony which exists between them?

SCHLEIERMACHER AND PROFESSOR SEWELL.

On showing part of what we had written on the Fifth Book of the *Republic* to a learned friend, we were not surprised by his protesting against what he called the hard measure we had dealt to Plato. He wished the *Republic* to be considered a youthful and crude performance, unworthy of the author of the *Socratic Dialogues*, by which works, and not by what we have called the *Platonic Monologues*, he contended that the genius, principles and character of Plato ought to be estimated. We on the other hand persisted that what we have somewhat loosely, but sufficiently intelligibly, called the *Platonic Monologues*, at the head of which the *Republic*, *Timæus* and *Laws* must be placed, exhibit strong internal evidences that the prevailing opinion respecting them is well founded, to wit, that they contain the results of Plato's travels in Egypt and Italy after his master's death,—that they are storehouses in which Plato has laid up all the riches, religious, moral and political, which he had collected from the Priests of Egypt and the Pythagoreans of Italy; that, on the other hand, they are the exponents of his own reasonings and speculations we may add twice reconsidered, and once remodeled, on the materials so collected,—that they indicate the place and the importance which he wished such materials, so commented on, revised, and corrected, should hold in what he would have us receive as his system; and lastly that the *Republic*, the *Timæus*, and the *Laws* show us to what extent the Philosophy of Socrates was admitted by Plato to form part (a *small* part,) of that composite structure of metaphysics and physics, religion, morals and politics, education, science and mysticism, which

the gorgeous mind of Plato built, or rather piled up, from materials as magnificent as they were heterogeneous.

For, though we agree with Schleiermacher, and his last supporter Professor Sewell, in considering the *Republic* to be the great exponent of what Plato would have us receive as his system, we can by no means adopt Schleiermacher's and Professor Sewell's theory that there *is* a perfect system, "a scientific solidity," in the *Republic;* still less can we admit the *Republic*, even after the additions and corrections in the *Laws*, to be in such harmony with the *Socratic Dialogues*, that the *Dialogues* may be received, (for this is Schleiermacher's theory) as conversational introductions to the *Monologues;* least of all can we allow Plato to be the author of the *Dialogues* in the same sense that we allow him to be the author of the *Monologues*.

In opposition to a theory which would have us consider the *Socratic Dialogues* as beautiful avenues leading up to a building of perfect architecture, the *Republic*, (or, as Professor Sewell would express it, an avenue of Sphynxes leading up to the Great Temple,) we are prepared to contend that the *most authentic* of the *Socratic Dialogues*, (those dialogues which, for internal evidence, and from correspondence with the *Memorabilia* and with one another, may be received as authentic accounts of the sayings and doings, the principles and practices, the reasonings and conclusions, and, in a word, of the philosophy of Socrates,) should be considered and treated exactly, or very nearly, as we consider and trea thet conversations of Socrates in the *Memorabilia*, that is, as *reports of the Philosophy of Socrates;* and we contend further, that the Philosophy of Socrates, as estimated by the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, and these *Dialogues* of Plato, is opposed to the Sensualism, the Asceticism, and the Mysticism of Plato, as well as to other Platonic errors

(religious, moral, and political,) which we have yet to notice. Indeed, the striking difference between the *Socratic Dialogues* and the *Platonic Monologues*, (for example, between the *Protagoras* and *Gorgias*, and the *Republic* and *Timæus*,) not only in soundness of principle and strength of argument, but in good sense, and pure taste, and correct composition, prove that the same person could not be the author (that is, in the highest and truest sense of authorship,) of works so very different, not to say so very opposite, in moral and intellectual characteristics—not even if we could admit the untenable theory that the *Monologues* were crude works of Plato's youth, and the *Dialogues* are the finished works of his maturer years. In a word, we contend that the real author of the *Platonic Monologues*, (that is, Plato,) could no more have risen to the intellectual simplicity and moral purity of the *Socratic Dialogues*, than the real author of the *Socratic Dialogues*, (that is, Socrates,) could have sunk to the moral and intellectual level of the *Platonic Monologues*. The line would be drawn too boldly and too hardly were we to adopt a *two-fold* division of Plato's works, distinguishing them into Platonic and Socratic; but if, allowing for transition and imitation, we make a *three-fold* division, viz., Socratic, Platonic, and Intermediate, we think all objects, philosophical, critical, and historical, would be better attained than by adhering to Schleiermacher's theory. Schleiermacher's criticisms on Xenophon as a writer, and on Socrates as a philosopher, prove that, however great was his scholastic laboriousness, and however much we are indebted to the pains he took to discover the sequence in which Plato intended his writings to be studied, Schleiermacher had neither the acuteness nor the delicacy necessary for the full appreciation of some of the most characteristic of the *Dialogues*, (we would instance the *Laches* and the *Ion*,) nor such views of

moral science as might enable him to estimate the religious, moral, and political differences between the systems of Socrates and Plato, and to decide on their relative merits.

Although we are fully prepared to support these remarks on Schleiermacher's theory, (a theory which confounds the *Socratic Dialogues* and the *Platonic Monologues* as harmonious parts of a comprehensive and consistent system of philosophy; for we grant that they may have been intended by Plato for consecutive parts of a continuous system of teaching,) by an examination of Schleiermacher's criticisms; and although we might refer our readers to Schleiermacher's dicta on the style of Xenophon, and the Philosophy of Socrates, which have been already noticed, as proofs that the German critic is not infallible; still the credit of Schleiermacher is so high, and in many respects very deservedly, with Platonists and Scholars, that we are glad to fall back on the authority of Aristotle in questioning Schleiermacher's theory, and in contending for the existence of a marked distinction, both in matter and manner, between the *Platonic Monologues*, and the most authentic of the *Socratic Dialogues*. The well-known criticism of Aristotle on the matter and style of the *Republic* and the *Laws*, (and the criticism is equally applicable to the style and matter of the *Timæus* and the *Phædon*, to the physics of the one and the metaphysics of the other, and, we may add, to the mysticism of both) to wit, "that there is a character of exaggeration, bombast, innovation, inconclusiveness, and impractibility in the reasonings which Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates," is not more applicable to the *Republic* and *Laws*, *Timæus*, and the *Phædon*, that it is totally inapplicable to the most authentic of the *Socratic Dialogues*. No words could be selected more exactly applicable to the one class of Plato's writings, or more absolutely inapplica-

ble to the other; and they may serve therefore to distinguish the *Platonic Monologues*, (to two of the most important of which they were specifically intended to be applied,) from the *Socratic Dialogues*, (to which they were not intended to be applied, nor at all applicable,) those *Dialogues* of Plato, which we have called *Socratic*, because we believe them to give a true account of what Socrates said and did, and of his peculiar manner of saying it; not intending to pledge ourselves to circumstances of time, place, or even of person, for with all these Plato took great liberties; but intending to indicate our conviction, that in *that manner* Socrates spoke and acted, and that *that matter* was in substance his philosophy. The *Republic*, *Laws*, and *Timæus*, (and, we may add, the mystical and metaphysical parts of the *Phædon*,) are as *genuine works* of Plato, as the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias;* but they are very far from being as *authentic accounts* of what Socrates said and did, or of his manner of saying and doing it. We find no difficulty, for example, in attributing to the same person the sensualism and the mysticism of the Fifth Book of the *Republic;* (because it belongs to the same person to run into opposite extremes;) nor do we find any difficulty in attributing both extremes to Plato. But we cannot attribute either the sensualism or the mysticism of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* to Socrates; not only because each extreme is opposed to his known principles and conduct, but because the wise moderation of Socrates was opposed to all extremes. On the other hand, we cannot attribute to Plato, (admitting *him* to be the real author of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*) the authorship, in the highest and truest sense of the word, of the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias;* not only because these works (the *Protagoras* and *Gorgias*,) agree in character with what we know of Socrates, but because they differ in character from much that we know of Plato. In a word, we claim for Socrates the author-

ship (in the higher sense of that word) of the most authentic of the *Socratic Dialogues*, (that is, of their matter, their manner, and, to a considerable extent, of their style); and we disclaim for Socrates the authorship of the *Platonic Monologues*. The *Platonic Monologues* are largely obnoxious to the criticism, and cannot be defended from the remarks of Aristotle; but neither the criticism, nor the remarks apply, nor were they intended by Aristotle to be applied, to the *Socratic Dialogues**. Professor Sewell objects to this criticism of Aristotle upon the *Republic* and *Laws;* but how does he seek to disprove it? By answering Aristotle's remarks on the *Republic* and the *Laws*, upon which this criticism is founded,—for example, Aristotle's remarks on the plan for a community of women, remarks, which, if they cannot be rebutted, in so far warrant the criticism? Professor Sewell cannot, and does not take this way of disproving Aristotle's criticism, for the plain and sufficient reason that the remarks are unanswerable. How then does Professor Sewell defend the *Monologues* of Plato from the above criticism of Aristotle? In the instance to which we have referred, (and it is an instance very important to the intellectual, as well as to the moral characteristics of the *Platonic Monologues*, for it attaches a charge of

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* The whole passage in the Second Book of Aristotle's *Politics* is as follows;—*τὸ μὲν οὖν περιττὸν ἔχουσι πάντες οἱ τοῦ Σωκράτους λόγοι καὶ τὸ κομψὸν, καὶ τὸ καινοτόμον καὶ τὸ ζητητικὸν, καλῶς δὲ πάντα ἴσως χαλεπόν.* Of this passage Schneider has given the following strange translation. "Exquisitum igitur quiddam habent omnes Socratis sermones, comptumque et politum, et novitatis plenum, et cum subtilitate quærendi et disputandi conjunctum; verum ut omnia recte in iis trandertur, fortasse fieri non potuit." It seems strange that any one pretending to translate or edit Aristotle should have given, or admitted such a translation. The expression *παντες οἱ τὸν Σωκρατους λογοι* evidently refers to *the reasonings in the Republic and the Laws* put by Plato into the mouth of Socrates, to which the criticism is limited. It neither applies, nor is intended by Aristotle to be applied to what we have called the *Socratic Dialogues*.

want of common sense, as well as of sound principles, to their author,) Professor Sewell attempts to get rid of these criticisms, and the remarks on which they are founded, by that well-known figure of rhetoric called explaining away. How difficult he finds it to wash a blackamoor white is proved by the number of unsuccessful attempts to accomplish his task. The whole process may be thus described. Having first proved that there is no evil in Plato's celebrated theory; he next proves that there is a great deal of good; and having thus demonstrated that Aristotle and the critics have misunderstood the real object of Plato, it follows that a criticism founded on remarks made under such misconceptions must fall with them to the ground. With the analysis we have given of parts of the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, and with Mr. Mitchell's summary of the demerits of that book before them, our readers will perhaps desire to see the process, by which Professor Sewell vindicates the *Platonic Monologues* from Mr. Mitchell's and Aristotle's censures. A part of Mr. Mitchell's estimate of the Fifth Book of the *Republic* is given in the following words:—"In this most unfeeling book all the great ties of our condition, parental, filial, and connubial, are proposed to be severed at a blow; nature, it appears, having made a mistake in investing us with such feelings, or the Philosopher forgetting that our feelings become enfeebled in proportion as they are carried beyond those limits. (This is the very argument of Aristotle.) In this guilty book lying is made a statutable, constitutional branch of duty in the first magistrate of the state—the promiscuous concubinage of the sexes is established as a fundamental law of society, and exposition of children, suppression and abortion are set down, not amongst things permitted, but amongst things enjoined*." These are strong accusations to

* MITCHELL'S *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 102.

get rid of; and our readers may well ask what logic and what morals can accomplish such a feat! Professor Sewell appears to have taken a hint from the celebrated case of Pickwick *versus* Bardell; but to have attempted a still bolder *alibi* than even the elder Mr. Weller would have dared to suggest. At the very time when Plato is asserted to have been engaged in "destroying all the great ties of our condition," he is proved by Professor Sewell to have been engaged in purifying, hallowing, extending, and strengthening the said ties. We will not deny our readers whatever of amusement and edification they can extract from such a course of logic and morals as is exhibited in the various steps of the following demonstration, which, in order that we may do full justice to Professor Sewell, we will give in the order in which they occur.

The first passage in which Professor Sewell faces the difficulty is that passage on the holiest and purest of ethics, which we have so frequently quoted. The second passage in which the subject is taken up prepares us for the mode in which it is to be treated.

"No more joining in the clamour against Plato's noble and pure mind, than we should charge with the crime of murder the finder and helper of a murdered man, because he has blood on his clothes."—p. 53.

The illustration will be considered rather a bold one by those who recollect the different modes Plato proposes in the Fifth Book of the *Republic* for checking excess of population. Professor Sewell has no such misgivings, but proceeds to carry the war boldly into the enemies' country.

"As an educational system, Plato's philosophy could no more move without the spring of affectionate feeling, than a locomotive engine, with all its wheels and boilers, can start if you put out the fire. Let not men suppose, as they do suppose in the present day, that you can educate by steam;

that Acts of Parliaments, and Joint Stock Companies, and meetings at Exeter Hall, and Commissions of Inquiry, and Mechanics' Institutes, and Lancasterian Schools, and doses of useful knowledge, diluted to the meanest capacities, and patchwork of Scripture stitched together, that the child may not know whence it comes, that all this bustle of cosmopolitan dreamers and political mountebanks can train up a single child in the way in which he should go. There must be affection—strong, natural, unconscious affection—and affection as He intended—the one all-comprehending Being, who has appointed for us each, in his wisdom, but one Father, one friend, one wife, one master, bound as to *one* country, sanctioned but *one* king, permitted to us but *one* Church."—p. 61.

Professor Sewell's boldness in talking of "one wife," when speaking of Plato's Community of Women, may be more obvious to some of our readers, than what Professor Sewell can mean by Plato's "spring of affectionate feeling." But the next passage will make what he means by Plato's "spring of affectionate feeling," more intelligible.

"He wished that every old man in the state might look on every young man as his child, but to obtain the groundwork for this feeling he was obliged to imagine, (imagine only, for he never proposed to realise) a state of things, which might give to all a community of interest and life, such as the Church literally fulfils in the spiritual world." —p. 63.

The illustration, or simile, is somewhat bold. The theory of Plato's "imagining only, for he never proposed to realize," has been already noticed. It is altogether untenable. The other illustration is a favourite with Professor Sewell, and he returns to it again.

"Like Christianity itself, he permitted particular attachment, and indulged and encouraged that universal instinct of paternal affection which, in the words of Clement, makes all who teach as fathers, and all who are taught as children,

and never allows a good man a single superiority over others, without compelling him to use it as a means of raising them to a level with himself, and of finding his own highest enjoyment in accomplishing their perfection. It was this spirit that actuated himself."—p. 64.

Universal instinct of paternal affection! A pretty periphrasis for a system of general concubinage.

"His intercourse with Dion, his visits to Dionysius, and even the story so often quoted, that he had endeavoured to obtain from the latter a territory, on which he might realize his theory of a state, are the best interpretation of the views with which, as said of Socrates in the *Convivium*, he addressed his syren strains to individuals, avowing himself in the strong language of a passionate people, not merely the friend, but the ἐραστὴς of the person, in whom he traced the seeds of virtue, and a capability of being won to his purpose."—p. 110.

If Professor Sewell will refer to passages (which it is impossible to quote) in the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, respecting the accommodations to be afforded to an army on active service, he will be able to dispense with any other quotations. He may compare the passages in question with passages in the *Memorabilia*, which indicate the real opinions of Socrates on such subjects—passages in which Xenophon quotes the opinion of Socrates, not only against Critias, but against himself (assuredly the most satisfactory of all evidence)—and then say, do *those* passages exculpate Plato, and do not *these* exculpate Socrates?

"Men cannot comprehend Plato, and still less can they undertake to defend him from the gravest of the charges brought against him by partial and superficial readers, if by an unpardonable anachronism his principles and language are transferred from one age and country to another totally different. We may bless the mercy of Providence, which has preserved European society far purer in its

outward form than the society of Athens, and in which therefore we cannot endure to hear language, or to speak of things, which Plato, as pure as ourselves,—more pure, because more pure in the midst of general corruption—in endeavouring to reform, was compelled to speak of; and which he spoke of without reserve, because in the world around him there was neither shame nor concealment. But in estimating the character of Plato, the question to be asked is, not if such things are spoken of, but how they are spoken of, and with what object, and under what object, and under what circumstances. Is it done to draw men from sin, or to encourage them in it? And when the mode of withdrawing them is considered, the question is not, if it be such as we might be bound to adopt under a different dispensation from God, but if it be the best, which could be used in the age and by the man who employed it."—p. 181.

Referring to the passages in the *Memorabilia* and the *Republic* to which we begged Professor Sewell's attention, we have only to add that his line of defence is perfectly true and fair as applied to Socrates, but is quite inapplicable to Plato. And the same may be said of the next quotation:—

"This is the true and equitable construction to be put upon his (Plato's) strong and frequent panegyrics upon beauty of external form, as the first object which is to engage the heart, and led it on through moral beauty, and beauty of intellect, to the one true Καλὸν—even God himself."—p. 182.

Professor Sewell understands the value of repetition, and goes over all his arguments in the next passage. The passage which follows this summary and repetition of his pleadings for Plato is bolder still, because it is *faced* with an apparent concession.

"This also is the great blot of the *Republic*—a blot which it is impossible to cover. True it is that Plato throws out his theory of marriage as a mere theory—as a wild imprac-

ticable mode of solving a great problem to the fancy, not either possible nor expedient to be realized. True that he warns the reader again and again, not to charge him with the design of realizing it. True that in the circumstances of his days, in the hopeless, irredeemable corruption of family life at Athens, he could scarcely trace the form of that high instrument in the hands of God, by which man is to be first reared into life, both in his body and his mind. True also that he would not destroy the instincts and affections of nature, but only multiply and transfer them, so that the whole state would be one family of 'fathers, children, and brothers:' as Christianity has realized the wish literally in all its parts, but by a spiritual marriage, and a spiritual regeneration. And true that his end was noble—to bind together the whole body in one, to extinguish all selfish affection, to secure for the child the highest and most watchful superintendence, to bring all the members of the polity immediately under the eye of the ruler, perhaps also even to purify and chasten (though the hope was vain), assuredly not to give a license to man's worst and lowest passions."—p. 271.

"When, in fact, we examine the real position of woman in Athenian society, as exhibited in the Greek comedies, and other notices of the day, there is reason to be astonished at the grandeur and elevation even of this most objectionable part of Plato's writings—astonished that with such a ruin before him he should have been able to conceive a plan for restoring it, though the plan itself was an error."—p. 272.

"Grandeur and elevation!" In some cases it is well to take high ground at once, in order to remove the cause out of the region of common sense. To ask great damages, with a serious face, in a case where a jury if left to themselves might be apt to think your client worthy of the pillory, is, we believe, good common-law practice. Our readers will perhaps think Professor Sewell has practised this rhetorical stratagem with sufficient boldness to merit a verdict of

acquittal for Plato. "True it is that Plato throws out his theory of marriage as a mere theory!" Why, he repeats it in his *Timæus* and clings tenaciously to it in his *Laws;* and when in the latter work he at last surrenders it as impracticable, or rather as something feasible in itself, and only impracticable from the folly of others, he still adheres to many of its most objectionable details. Aristotle indeed tells us (what is sufficiently obvious from the tone of the work itself) that the *Laws* were a concession to public opinion, rather than any change of principle.

Thus we find the moral evils which had arisen from the gymnastic exercises of the Greeks are acknowledged in the First Book of the *Laws;* and in the same book the licentiousness of the women of Sparta is asserted; and afterwards an all but hopelessness of improvement in the character of the women of Greece is plainly intimated; and yet, in spite of the inferences to be derived from such premises, the plan for introducing gymnastic exercises amongst the women is so far persisted in (see the eighth book), as to insure a recurrence of similar evils. In like manner, though such concessions are made (in the eighth book) respecting the importance of the institution of marriage (supposing the passage to be genuine), as might seem to imply a great change of principle; yet not only is the desirableness of Plato's theory insisted on (in the fifth book), though its immediate *practicability* is given up, but such interferences with marriage are proposed to be made matter of positive institution, as would have ensured all the worst effects that have ever been imputed to the very worst abuses of oral confession amongst the Romanists. The one strong passage in favour of marriage, in the Eighth Book of the *Laws*, is so entirely at variance with Plato's reiterated opinions and theories, that we cannot tell what to make of it.

Professor Sewell having succeeded in extracting grandeur and elevation from the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, proceeds with more ease to attribute to Plato all the sayings and doings of Socrates that are worth appropriating; or, in other words, he proceeds to carry out Schleiermacher's theory, that Plato is as much the author of the *Socratic Dialogues* as of the *Platonic Monologues*. As we consider this theory irreconcilable with the evidence, unjust to Socrates, and injurious to philosophy, we must persist (though at the risk of appearing pertinacious) to object to other methods taken by Professor Sewell to confound the *Dialogues* and *Monologues* into one system, and to attribute the authorship of both equally to Plato. The next step which Professor Sewell takes (after having so ingeniously explained away the Fifth Book of the *Republic* till it ceases to be an indelible distinction—a wide gulph between the *Monologues* and the *Dialogues*, and between Socrates and Plato,) is to mystify the character of Socrates till it ceases to possess sufficient consistency, reality, and individuality to sustain a claim of authorship. We have glimpses of Socrates from time to time,—sometimes as a sort of ideal chorus to the real dramas of Plato (p. 25); sometimes as a good butt for the wit of Aristophanes (p. 42); now as a character more than half invented by Plato (p. 77); now as having in his real character been a sort of dervise, monk, or mystic (p. 185); and, lastly, we are told, that it is not till we arrive at the *Republic* that "the irony ceases, the quaint grotesqueness of Socrates' character is softened down and disappears; or, rather, the Socratic mask is dropped, and exhibits the whole noble unaffected expression of the philosopher's heart and mind" (p. 206). In other words, we are to look for the perfect ideal character of Socrates in the *Republic*, where also we find the perfection and completion of the philosophy of Plato.

We acknowledge that we looked with all the more suspicion on this course of experiments on the character of Socrates, after having witnessed the ingenious process by which Professor Sewell contrives to transmute the sensualism of Plato into fine specimens of grandeur and elevation. We hardly know which would be the greater evil, that the Socrates of the *Dialogues* should pass off *in fumo*, or that the Socrates of the *Dialogues* should be amalgamated with the Socrates of the *Republic*. The result of that critical sublimation and this critical amalgamation is the very Q. E. D. of Schleiermacher's theory, to wit, that Plato is the author, in thought as well as in expression, of the *Dialogues* and the *Monologues*, and is consequently and confessedly *Rex Philosophorum*. Against this conclusion, and the premises by which it is got at, we protest in the name of justice and Socrates, of truth and philosophy, of criticism and common-sense.

Professor Sewell's may be excellent reasoning if tried by mood and figure; that is, by the third part of logic. And we have long been convinced that such reasonings are the natural fruit of a tree which makes the third part of logic nine-tenths of the whole, instead of making individualization and generalization, that is, the first and second parts of logic, not nine parts out of ten, but ninety-nine parts out of a hundred. But to return to the natural consequences of such a system in the remarks of Professor Sewell upon Plato. Professor Sewell having first purified Plato from the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, and having by so doing fitted Plato to be a recipient of all the moral and intellectual excellencies which belong to Socrates, and are exemplified in the authentic *Socratic Dialogues;* and having, in the second place, mystified the character of Socrates, so that it can no longer retain, and is prepared to give out, and part with all his excellencies, moral and intellectual, to Plato; finds it an easy and a

pleasant work (and he performs it with much spirit and effect) to transfer all that is best in Socrates to Plato. It is Plato whose "great object was man" (p. 18), and who taught men to know themselves. It is Plato who was "the first of philosophers who made practical goodness and duty the one great end of life" (p. 21), and taught men to discharge their duties. It is Plato who "had an emanation more or less direct from the Fountain of all Wisdom" (p. 28). It is Plato who emulates Aristophanes in "his noble tone of morals," to say nothing of "that admirable play upon the character of Socrates" (p. 42). It is Plato who has not only founded a sound *subjective* philosophy, "in a peculiar degree a philosophy of persons" (p. 60), but has also built up a sound *objective* philosophy, "something above and beyond us, wholly unmoved by our fancies and independent of our sensations (p. 81). It is Plato who "wrote his *Dialogues*" (p. 54), in order to draw away the young from the schools of the sophists; and it is Plato who wrote his *Monologues*, "the *Republic*, the *Laws*, the *Timæus*, and the *Critias*," in order to supply a solution "to every question left unsettled in any one of the former *Dialogues*" (p. 36). Above and before all, it is Plato who placed in the perfect edifice of his philosophy "the informing spirit by whom the heavens themselves were made" (p. 84). In a word it is Plato, purified and amplified after the manner we have seen, who thought and felt, said and did everything that was worthy of being thought, felt, said, and done; whilst Socrates, mystified into the shadow of a shade, has not left him even the honour of refusing to run away from his prison-house—for Professor Sewell quotes the *Crito*, to prove that it was *Plato* who thought that men ought to obey the laws of their country, even to the voluntary endurance of an unjust sentence. Why did not Professor Sewell go one step further, and tell us that it

was Plato who drank the poison, and that it was Socrates who ran away to Megara?

There are many and great defects in the *Platonic Monologues* which prove, almost as clearly as the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, that the author of the *Platonic Monologues* could not be the real author of the *Socratic Dialogues;* and Professor Sewell displays great ingenuity, first, in extenuating these faults till they almost vanish, and secondly, in transmuting the residuum into some great excellence. Some of these faults distinguish the *Monologues* so clearly from the *Dialogues*, or, in other words, distinguish Plato so clearly from Socrates, and philosophy from mysticism, throwing so much light on the most remarkable characteristics of Plato's mysticism, and preparing us for the most remarkable consequences of that mysticism, that we must persist in drawing further attention to Professor's Sewell's panegyric on Plato's faults.

One of Plato's most undeniable faults is the *poeticalness* (if we may be allowed to coin so awkward a word), not of his style (as is commonly, and very erroneously supposed) but of his reasonings. It is not true that he uses an excess of metaphor in his *style;* on the contrary, his style is the pure, simple, idiomatical style of good society. But it is true, (however simple, idiomatical, and business-like is his style) that he constantly uses mere metaphors, the very loosest analogies, as arguments. The *style* of the argumentative parts of the *Phædon* is not much inferior to that of the best of the *Socratic Dialogues;* but the *reasonings* in the *Phædon*, from first to last, are a series of mere metaphors and loose analogies. This fault is deep-rooted in Plato's nature, proceeding from, and conducing to, that tone of exaggeration, which shews itself in almost every part of the *Platonic Monologues*. Men are very apt to deceive themselves strangely in this matter. Yet the case is sufficiently

intelligible. The style of Goldsmith is a model of simplicity, whilst the character and opinions of the man were generally exaggerated. The same may be said of Sheridan. On the other hand, Johnson's thoughts are generally moderate, and it is his style only that is exaggerated. We have a still more remarkable instance in an able writer of the present day; the exaggeration of whose style does not imply exaggeration of thought. From a neglect of this distinction between thought and expression, faults have often been attributed to Plato's style, from which it is peculiarly free, whilst an attempt is made by Professor Sewell to convert the over-poeticalness of Plato's reasonings into an excellence. Professor Sewell, speaking of the Greeks, says "Their whole nature was in some sort sensualized; and truth, stripped of grace and music, could no more reach their mind, than religion could touch their heart, except as veiled under a gorgeous mythology. Much of what has been called the poetry of Plato is a concession to this popular weakness" (p. 10). In another passage, Professor Sewell calls Plato's "brilliant passages"—"resting stones and reliefs, (necessary concessions to human weakness,) to enable the mind to ascend to a far higher range of thought" (p. 5). This phrase "concession to human weakness" is found by Professor Sewell a word of such "excellent command," that he employs it on frequent and hard service. Thus he talks of Plato's "*affections*," (another very *accommodating* phrase) as "concessions to the necessities of the age" (p. 60). But let us return to that poeticalness of Plato's reasonings which, as Professor Sewell would persuade us, was a concession to human weakness and to the necessities of the age. Professor Sewell is right in connecting Plato's taste for a gorgeous mythology with the poetical character of his reasonings. The gorgeous mythology of the Tenth Book of the *Republic* and the

poetical reasonings in the *Phædon*, are as highly platonic, as they are eminently un-socratic. The piety of Socrates is never rested upon "a gorgeous mythology," nor, if we may be allowed the expression, does he intoxicate himself by such helps before going into action. Yet the piety of Socrates has far more real depth and strength than is exhibited in those "brilliant passages" of Plato, in which he stands entranced before the idea of the Good. In like manner the reasonings of Socrates abound in simple and plain facts, simply and plainly expressed, and always warranting the inferences drawn from them; whilst the reasonings of Plato abound in striking images, displayed with much picturesque effect, but too frequently not warranting the theories attempted to be founded on them. The reasonings of Plato are too often castles in the air, the baseless fabric of a vision; and not seldom *ignes fatui*, leading into farther errors. Professor Sewell protests against the consequences which Platonists and Gnostics have derived from Platonism; but if the premises of Plato's Mysticism are allowed, we see not how we are to escape from its consequences. The poetical character of Plato's mythology and reasoning may be seen in the *Timæus*, the Tenth Book of the *Republic*, and the *Phædon*. In the *Timæus* Plato gives a minute account of Creation, and of all that the Creator said, and of all the Demons did, when the moral and physical world was called into being. In the Tenth Book of the *Republic*, Plato gives very minute details of a Future State, Hades, Tartarus, and Elysium, and of the Metempsychosis, or Transmigration of Souls, and of past and future states of being. In the *Phædon* Plato enters upon a course of metaphysical reasonings, in proof of the soundness of the above gorgeous mythology; but in point of evidence, the reasonings of the *Phædon* are quite as poetical as the facts of the Tenth Book of the *Republic*. Nothing

can be more unlike such quasi-facts and quasi-reasonings than the physical facts and metaphysical reasonings by which Socrates ascended, (as may be seen in his conversations with Aristodemus and Euthydemus in the *Memorabilia*,) from the world to its Creator, and from the mind of man to the Divine Mind; nor could anything be more unlike the sound confidence and sound hopes, which enabled Socrates to appeal with such simple, but deep assurance from the injustice of his judges to the justice of a higher tribunal. It is, we may add, in the *Socratic Dialogues* that we shall find the most striking displays of the sound premises, and sound reasonings, and sound conclusions of Socrates; whilst it is in the *Platonic Monologues*, (and in such of the Dialogues as are not Socratic, but Platonic,) that we shall find innumerable and glaring specimens of the very poetical character of Plato's premises, and reasonings, and conclusions. In these respects, the Fifth Book of the *Republic* is not an exception from what may be considered a characteristic of Plato, the poeticalness of his facts, reasonings and inferences.

It is impossible to speak of the poetical character of Plato's mind, without recurring to his treatment of Homer. Of all Plato's faults, (and they are neither few in number nor unimportant in character,) there is not one which is more offensive and more unpardonable than the sceptical manner in which he has spoken of the Myths of Homer,—or, in other words, of the religion of his country,—contrasted with the dogmatical manner in which he speaks of his own mysticism. It might be supposed that none of the elements of pious feeling and religious obligation are to be found in Homer; that the great work which Legislators introduced into Greece, about which Princes and Politicians, enacted laws, which Philosophers and Poets edited (and doubtless amended), in which the Priest found

his rites, and the People their customs, was fit only to be proscribed in a well-constituted state. If the interpretation we have offered in a former Essay of the secret meaning of some of Homer's Myths be well founded, (and it is quite impossible to read Homer without being convinced of the soundness of some such interpretation,) what shall we say of Plato's insulting his countrymen by his sweeping condemnations of the Myths of Homer? In this treatment of the Myths of Homer there is not greater disloyalty to the genius and religion of his country, than there is a shallow estimate of the language of piety in all ages.

Let us be allowed to say a few more words about Plato's treatment of Homer, which appears to us not more deficient in patriotism and good taste, (to say nothing about consistency,) than in philosophy. A language of mysticism must, to a certain extent, be the language of piety in all ages, and the difference at different periods will consist more in the sense in which that language is employed, than in ever getting rid of the language of mysticism. If what may be called *natural language* is fixed unalterably, and defies all change from time, place, and circumstance; so that gestures, looks, and tones expressive of every sensation, every feeling, and, we had almost said, of every thought, are so unalterably fixed by the first principles of our nature, that the musician, the actor, and the orator, has to deal with subjects as definite and unchangeable as those which are submitted to the naturalist and the moralist; if even *arbitrary language*, (though its stores may, to a certain extent, be diverted to other uses, and may receive constant additions in the course of time,) never loses a sound or an inflection whilst a nation survives, so that syllables and letters pass down the current of time with a wonderful permanency; if the changes which history has to record in events, and which philosophy has to state in know-

ledge, are generally expressed by a new application of old forms of speech,—why should that which is true respecting every other kind of subject and every other class of words, be untrue respecting the language of mysticism? Even when sounder views in religion prevail, the same words, and the same phrases, and the same images that were used before, will continue to be used, though in a sounder sense. It is [illegible]th the language of science, history, and literat[illegible], and there is no reason why it should not be [illegible]ch the language of religion. As in physics [illegible]ave not the power to destroy a drop of water nor a grain of sand, though we may unite them in infinite combinations, so with language, and more especially with the language of religion, the analogy is found to hold good. The forms and images, the words and phrases of early piety, whether of individuals or of nations, continue to a wonderful extent to be the language of piety through the life-time of the individual or nation; and it was, we insist, as little philosophical in Plato, as it was pious or patriotic, consistent or in good taste, to speak slightingly of the mythology of Homer and of Greece. Had Socrates done so, (we have seen that he did the very opposite,) we might refer it to the matter-of-fact nature of his mind and studies; or in Aristotle we might attribute an aversion to mythology to his love of rigid analysis and strictly scientific evidence. In Plato such want of loyalty to Homer must have proceeded from a set purpose to supersede the *Iliad* by a prose and philosophic epic. In superseding the mystical fables of Homer by the religious narratives of Plato, we do not get rid of the language of mysticism, though we alter its tone. For example, when Plato objects to the mystical language in which Homer describes the contest between antagonist principles, (physical and moral,) by the sufficiently obvious allegory of contests between Gods and Giants, and

Heroes, it is observable that he himself is obliged to employ a language of mysticism for the same purpose in the *Timæus;* and that in making so great a change, he unites a form of mysticism novel and strange to Greece, with a philosophy which was proved afterwards to be unsound. Would it not have been more philosophical, as well as more patriotic, and in far better taste, not to have dissolved the great religious and political ties of Greece, not to have broken the very thread of a nation's life? As Aristotle edited, Plato might have commented on Homer, instead of raising a parricidal hand against the Poet of Greece.

In like manner when Plato objects to the mystical language in which Homer speaks of the Father of Gods and Men, he himself is obliged to adopt a mystical language in speaking of "the Good," which by its vague and indefinite, vehement and passionate character, led the way to the asceticism and mysticism of the later Platonists and Gnostics. To the consequences of Plato's mystical language we shall return in our next Essay: and, at present, will only remark on the strange delusion which makes Professor Sewell eulogize "the stern authoritative tone with which Plato supports the religion of his country, whether Socrates is commanded to die, or an hereditary mythology is enforced*." Never surely was questionable praise more questionably illustrated. It appears, however, that Plato formed some such estimate of himself; for in a passage warmly eulogized by Professor Sewell, Plato exclaims—"How can we without passion reason to prove the existence of God? It must be with bitterness of heart, with hatred and indignation against the men who compel us to engage in such an argument. They who once trusted to the tales which from their childhood, when lying on the

* See *Horæ Platonicæ*, p. 90, where the passage which follows in the text is quoted from the *Laws*.

breast, they used to hear from their nurses and mothers." No person had ever less tenderness for the tales of childhood than Plato; nor, we may add, did any one ever draw more largely on the credulity of manhood than Plato; and it seems therefore not very consistent (though it is following in the steps of Aristophanes, whose support of an "hereditary mythology" Professor Sewell so much admires) to feel "bitterness of heart, hatred and indignation," against those who reject the figments of the *Timæus*, and the Tenth Book of the *Republic*, or the reasonings of the *Phædon*. It is when we contrast the spirit of Plato with the spirit of Socrates, as shown in their feelings and conduct to the religion of their country, that we feel how right-hearted and right-minded, how catholic and manly was the spirit and conduct of Socrates.

Professor Sewell tells us that German Dogmatists and French Sceptics are at this time equally appealing to the authority of Plato*; and he endeavours to fasten on the Frenchman a charge of mistaking the very object and nature of Plato's philosophy, which he insists with the German, was *dogmatical*. Professor Sewell does not distinguish between the intentions of Plato and the effects of Platonism. The former may have been eminently dogmatical, whilst the latter may have been as eminently sceptical. The minute details of Hades, Tartarus, and Elysium, in the Tenth Book of the *Republic*, may be intended to support the belief in a future state, and with the mystic they may have done so; but their general tendency may have been to bring the great doctrines of man's accountableness and future retribution into discredit. In like manner, the minute details of the process of moral and physical creation, given in the *Timæus*, was doubtless

* *Horæ Platonicæ*, pp. 1, 2, 3, &c.

intended to support the great doctrine of Theism against Atheism, and with the mystic it may have done so; but its general tendency may have been to provoke scepticism and unbelief. In like manner Plato's exaggerated language respecting the evidence of intellect and spirit, and his depreciating language respecting body and matter, his exaggeration of intelligibles, and his extenuation of sensibles, (whatever may have been intended,) may have produced different effects at different periods and on different minds, but always an unsound effect, inasmuch as one portion of a twofold evidence was certain to be undervalued, whilst the other was as certain to be over-estimated. Such an oscillation between materialism and spiritualism (a doubting of one or of the other, instead of drawing a twofold consistent evidence from both,) tends ultimately to scepticism and indifference.

Professor Sewell remarks, in one place*, on the unfairness of Cicero's estimate of Plato, as confounding the opinions of the certainty-denying, probability-hunting Platonists of a later period with the genuine doctrines of Plato. In a like manner he objects to the high flown dogmas of Alexandrian Platonists and Gnostics as equally departing from the true doctrines of Plato. But to us it appears that both Scepticism and Dogmatism (in different periods, and in different countries, and in different minds) are the very effects which might be anticipated from the Mysticism of Plato, though neither of these results could have arisen from the Philosophy of Socrates. It was this twofold error of Platonism which arrested and perverted both physics and morals; diverting men's minds from sound physics to the pseudo-physics of the *Timæus*, and from sound metaphysics to the pseudo-metaphysics of the *Phædon*,

* *Horæ Platonicæ*, p. 35.

till mystics and magicians questioned the Spirit of Plato

> to unfold
> What worlds and what vast regions hold
> The immortal mind which has forsook
> Her mansion in this fleshy nook;

whilst alchemists and astrologers sought in Plato a means of influencing

> those demons that are found
> In fire, air, flood, and under ground,
> Whose power hath a true consent
> With Planet and with Element.

We may refer to the *Republic* and the *Timæus*, in a word, to the *Platonic Monologues*, for proofs that such perversions might fairly be expected from the Mysticism of Plato. But in the more authentic *Socratic Dialogues* of Plato, (as in the conversations of Socrates in Xenophon,) will be found the elements and the promise of a very different state both of Religion and Philosophy. It is indeed most mortifying to find a pupil of Socrates becoming the source of speculations and opinions, and practices, which we would more willingly refer to Babylon, Egypt, Italy, or Sicily, than to Greece and Philosophy, and Socrates. But in truth neither Greece, nor Philosophy, nor Socrates, must be held answerable for the Mysticism and Scepticism, the Asceticism and Sensualism, the Dogmatism and the Anarchy, any more than for the Eclecticism and Syncretism of Plato. We must again and again contend that a separation of the *Socratic Dialogues* from the *Platonic Monologues*, (allowing for some intermediate works,) is not more necessary for understanding the real characters of Socrates and Plato, than of understanding what constitutes Mysticism, and what constitutes Philosophy, and how the former is closely connected with Superstition, and how the latter is as closely connected with Religion. This distinction

between Plato and Socrates, between what belongs to Plato and what belongs to Socrates, between Philosophy and Mysticism, between Superstition and Religion, neither Schleiermacher nor Professor Sewell have attempted to make. Their theory, indeed, requires that all that is most excellent in Socrates and in the *Socratic Dialogues* should be shown to exist in a more perfect developement in Plato and in the *Republic*. To us, it appears, that what Schleiermacher would set forth as the perfect science of Plato and of the *Republic*, is rather the forced union of the Philosophy of Socrates, the Mysticism of Pythagoras, the Politics of Egypt, and the Sensualism of Sicily, and that this monster is aptly described by that passage in Horace, the whole of which we may now venture to quote.

> Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
> Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
> Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
> Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne,
> Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?

If such be a fair picture of the Syncretism of Plato, what shall we say of the Theory which sees nothing in this composite and discordant monster but the verum, simplex, sincerum of Philosophy? And what shall we say of the Criticism which confounds two such characters as Socrates and Plato?

Professor Sewell, in this as in all other cases, stands boldly in the breach in defence of Platonism; and, like a good soldier, is most forward in the least defensible position, crying aloud, "Nor shall the name of Plato be advanced as a sanction for that foolish eclectical vanity which would place itself in the centre of all systems, like a low-born usurper in the midst of conquered sovereigns" (p. 13.) Professor Sewell, like his great master, is very powerful in reasoning by metaphors; but he must take other weapons to dis-

prove the evidence that Platonism has risen upon the foundations of Socrates and Pythagoras, to the injury of the former, and to the obscuration of both. Professor Sewell will find it difficult to show that the *Socrates of the Republic*, with his sensualism, and asceticism, and mysticism, and dogmatism, and scepticism, is not a prostitution of the authority of the true Socrates. Happily the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon and the *Socratic Dialogues* have prevented the ruin of the noblest character and the soundest philosophy from being consummated.

The *Horæ Platonicæ* of Professor Sewell is a clever work, written in a style not unworthy of a follower of Plato, and bringing together a considerable body of information to the honour of Plato. It is a panegyric on Plato from the beginning to the end: and therefore the reader will look in vain into the text for any fair account of the relation between Socrates and Plato, or any fair estimate of the character and philosophy of each. But truth is not easily suppressed. Though Professor Sewell's readers will look in vain through his text for a fair estimate of Socrates and Plato, they have only to refer to a brief note at the bottom of the fifty-fifth page, where, in the form of a quotation, will be found an admirable summary of the merits of Socrates and Plato. "Dans Socrate on admire l'homme, le modèle du vrai sage: dans Platon on admire l'artiste heureux, quoique il l'ait trop souvent alteré en pretendant l'embellir." If the reader will only remember the force of the French idiom, and that the French word "alterer" is not exactly translated by the English word "alter," there will be the less danger of his confounding the above censure with the somewhat questionable compliment paid by Johnson to Goldsmith—"nihil tetigit quod non *ornavit*." Be this as it may, the Dictionary of the Academy explains the word "*alterer*," "changer l'etat d'une chose de bien en mal." To use the

words of Degerando quoted by Professor Sewell, such alteration has been made *too often* by Plato in the philosophy of Socrates, changing a fitting care of the body into an indulgence of the passions, self-command into asceticism, piety into mysticism, principle into dogmatism, and, in a word, the Philosophy of Socrates into the Mysticism of Plato.

The Philosophy of Socrates is pre-eminently distinguished by the three great qualities, simplicity, completeness, and manliness; a *simplicity* so plain, that a learned critic, missing the obscurity and complication to which he had been accustomed to attach the idea and name of philosophy, has not hesitated to deny all scientific solidity whatever to the Philosophy of Socrates; a *completeness* so perfect, that though time may add and has added the discoveries of ages, no alteration of the system is required, but still Piety, Justice, and Self-command continue to be the three great elements of virtue; a *manliness* so remarkable, that though other systems may make enthusiastic speculators or cold analysers, hard ascetics, or soft voluptuaries, narrow dogmatists, or loose sceptics, it is the philosophy of Socrates which is best fitted to make *men*, teaching them to cultivate the corporeal, intellectual, moral, and spiritual habits, and ultimately the dispositions, which become *men*, fitting the individual, the family, and the nation, for discharging the duties and obtaining the happiness of *men*. We may add also that the Philosophy of Socrates, (in this respect how unlike the Mysticism of Plato!) practically exhibits the mean of Aristotle between excess and defect both in principle and conduct, as the measure of action; but that the *mainspring of action* in the Philosophy of Socrates is holier, higher, and more constraining than either the moderation or the utilitarianism of the Peripatetic. But the Characteristics of Socrates will be made more plain, when we shall have given an analysis with extracts

of Plato's *Socratic Dialogues*, comparing them with the *Memorabilia*, and contrasting them with the *Platonic Monologues*.

It may appear strange that such a theory as Schleiermacher's, confounding Socrates with Plato, and the *Socratic Dialogues* with the *Platonic Monologues*, (making the former mere introductions to the latter,) should have approved itself for a moment to the mind of a diligent scholar like Schleiermacher, and should have obtained a moment's hearing from other scholars. This phenomenon in criticism can only be solved by referring it to a principle, which is too often dominant in enquiries into truth. "So very easy a matter," says the Greek Historian, "do the generality of men make the investigation of truth; and so ready are they to adopt whatever theory presents itself most readily." Charmed with Plato's skill as a Writer, and overlooking his faults as a Philosopher, Schleiermacher first assumes that Plato is the author of all his works, and then finds in those which are more simple in character, and less comprehensive in subject, colloquial introductions to those which are written in a more ambitious style, in a more monologic form, and whose subject-matter is most wide and encyclopedic. But though this theory, which presents itself so readily to the mind, may be said to absorb the *Dialogues* in the *Monologues*, and the Philosophy and Character of Socrates in the Philosophy and Characte of Plato, we have little doubt that it is the theory of Plato's works, which Plato himself wished to be adopted. It would be quite in keeping with the character and objects of Plato to have divided his labour and skill between this plan of his works and the perfecting the style of each; and it is a valuable service which Schleiermacher has rendered the readers of Plato to enable them to take up Plato's writings in the order in which Plato may have intended them to be read. But to suppose

that such a series juncturaque, though elaborated by the most accomplished of Eclectics and Syncretists, is a perfectly scientific system, and is composed of sound and harmonious elements, and that all these elements are Plato's, is, to say the least of it, an assumption in opposition to all evidence.

Facts in the present history of Platonism, and feelings towards Plato at the present time, indicate at once a vitality and a deadness in Platonism, a curiosity respecting, and a distaste for Plato, which are in themselves remarkable phenomena. Never have there been writings, and a writer, at once so eulogised, and so decried. If the view we have taken of Platonism is sound, and the works of Plato are divisible into two portions of very distinct characters, (to say nothing at present of the works which may be considered of an intermediate character and common property)—the one portion giving to view the thoughts, feelings, principles, and conduct of Socrates, as sound in the great elements of religion, morals, and, as we shall presently show, of politics, as in the leading principles of thought and expression, of logic and rhetoric,—the other, (that portion of Plato's works which brings us acquainted with his own character and speculations,) having much that tends to mysticism and licentiousness, dogmatism and scepticism, much also that is sophistical in reasoning, rhetorical in expression, and exaggerated in feeling, (though these defects are partly concealed under the forms of a perfect language, and by the ornaments of a consummate art)—then there is no cause for surprise that works of so contradictory a character, not having been separated into their elements, but having been considered as a whole, should have been looked upon alternately with admiration, disgust, and neglect, according as these or those elements of Platonism presented themselves most strongly to the critic's mind. But, we scarcely need to add, it is more in accordance

with sound criticism, philosophy, common sense, and usefulness, to separate what is altogether wise and good, from what is in so many respects foolish and evil, or, in other words, to separate the Philosophy and Character of Socrates from the Philosophy and Character of Plato.

DR. BURTON'S ESTIMATE OF GNOSTICISM, ITS CONNEXION WITH PLATONISM, AND ITS BEARING UPON CHRISTIANITY.

In our present article we shall proceed to lay before our readers some of the most remarkable *consequences* of Platonism; in the course of examining which we shall obtain some knowledge of the *sources* of Plato's Mysticism. In following Platonism to its consequences in Gnosticism, we cannot allow that we are estimating a sound system by accidental evil results. We appeal to the proofs already laid before our readers, that some of the worst elements of Mysticism, (evil causes naturally leading to evil effects,) are the most striking characteristics of Platonism; and there is no ground for surprise that ascetism and sensualism, dogmatism and scepticism, should go in increasing; or that Mysticism, which is the union of these elements, should display its evil consequences more and more broadly. Indeed it is the nature of Mysticism, as it is of all exaggeration, to be carried forward into farther excesses, till it attains the reductio ad absurdum of error; for as truth is in its nature permanent, so error is in its nature progressive. The Philosophy of Socrates excites the same feelings, and produces the same conviction now, that it did more than two thousand years ago: but the Mysticism of Plato is viewed with ever varying feelings, now with admiration, now with contempt, now with indifference. We have only to add, that the greater part of the following article on Gnosticism appeared in the *Biblical Cyclopædia*, edited by Mr. Kitto; by whose permission it is reprinted in its present form.

In the whole history of the human mind there is not a more instructive chapter, at once strange and sad, interesting to our curiosity, and mortifying to our pride, than the history of Platonism sinking into Gnosticism, or, in other words, the History of Greek Philosophy merging into Oriental Mysticism; showing, on the one hand, the decline and fall of Philosophy, and, on the other, the rise and progress of Syncretism. Perhaps, also, it is the most remarkable instance on record, that out of the religious, moral, and political, in one word, the intellectual corruption which brings on the fall of great and mighty nations, (so it doubtless was with Babylon and Thebes, and so we know it to have been with Athens and Rome,) God's providence educes purer principles and higher hopes for the nations and people that rise out of their ashes; who, if they will be taught wisdom and principle, righteousness and peace, by the errors and sufferings of those who have preceded them, may rise to higher destinies in the history of man's conduct and God's providence. If we may be allowed to borrow an illustration from one of the most ancient of the arts of life,—the woof of human destiny exhibits the same unbroken threads running through countless ages; it is the warp alone that varies, exhibiting finer threads, brighter colours, and a fairer pattern, as the arts of life are multiplied and perfected, and as the designs of providence are more and more displayed.

In the *Bampton Lectures* of Dr. Edward Burton, late Regius Professor of Divinity of Oxford, Gnosticism is attributed principally to the writings of Plato, as studied at Alexandria. Though the wisdom of Egypt may have influenced the Greeks and Romans through the Mysticism of Pythagoras; though the Oriental doctrines of Babylon may have made their way amongst the Jews, both of Jerusalem and Alexandria, by means of their Cabbala and Talmuds; and

though some sects of declared Gnostics may have gone still more directly to the metaphysical, or rather mystical, genealogies of the Eastern Magi; still it is the opinion of Dr. Burton that it was the Greek writings of Plato which gave the extraordinary impulse of their genius, and, if we may use the word, of their fashion, to the lost writings of the Gnostics, as well as to those of Philo and Plotinus;—in a word, that Platonist, Philonist, and Gnostic, are all emanations, at different distances, from the Gnosis of Plato; though some of these have drawn so deeply from the fountains from which Plato drew, as to have muddied the stream, and darkened the light which they derived primarily from the writings of Plato.

The character, learning and station of Dr. Burton, the years of study he is known to have devoted to this subject, the judicious moderation with which he has spoken of the Fathers, the general fairness and ability with which he has examined his authorities, the mass of valuable information he has accumulated in his notes, and lastly, the ably reasoned theory which he has brought forward in his Lectures, entitle his opinions on this subject to great attention. It is our purpose, therefore, in our present article on Gnosticism, to give such a series of extracts from Dr. Burton's Lectures, (with references to the most valuable of his Notes,) as may bring his opinions and reasonings, and the facts on which he grounds them, most fairly before our readers. We take this course, as it would not be fair towards a great scholar and divine to present his thoughts in our own words; nor, on the other hand, would it be wise to give up any part of the authority of Dr. Burton's name. We may add also that so valuable a work of theological criticism as Professor Burton's *Inquiries into the Heresies of the Apostolic Age*, (in which History, Philosophy, and Criticism are made the handmaids

of Religion) deserves to be rendered both better known and more accessible to the general reader.

Dr. Burton states it to be the object of his work "to consider the heresies which infested the Church in the lifetime of the Apostles," that is, as he afterwards shews, "during the first century of the Christian era*." Respecting the probability of our finding traces of heresies in the New Testament, Dr. Burton remarks: "If false doctrines were disseminated in the Church while the Apostles were alive, it is at least highly probable that they would allude to them in their writings†." He then proceeds to quote texts which clearly prove the existence of heresies in the days of the Apostles themselves. (1 Cor. xi. 19; Gal. v. 20; Titus iii. 10; 1 John ii. 18, 19; Coloss. ii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 20, 21; Rev. ii. 6, 15; 2 Tim. 17, 18; 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; 2 Tim. i. 15; 3 John, ver. 9.)

After tracing the term heresy through its successive meanings to the present time, he adds,

"In the course of these Lectures I shall speak of the heresies of the apostolic age in the sense which was attached to the term by the early Fathers; and all that I wish to be remembered at present is that the term is not to be understood according to modern ideas," (*i.e.*, as limited to heterodoxies about the Trinity) "but that an heretic is a man who embraces any opinion concerning religion, that opinion not being in accordance with the faith of the Gospel‡."

Approaching still nearer to his main subject, he adds,

"It will appear in the course of these Lectures, that many persons who were called heretics in the first and second centuries had little or nothing in common with Christianity. They took such parts of the Gospel as suited their views, or struck their fancy: but these rays of light they mixed up and buried under such a chaos of absurdity,

* *Inquiries*, p. 3. † p. 4. ‡ p. 13.

that the Apostles themselves would hardly have recognised their own doctrines. Such were most of the heresies in the lifetime of the Apostles; and when we come to consider the state of philosophical opinion at that period, we shall cease to wonder that the Fathers speak of so many heresies appearing in the lifetime of the Apostles*."

Having thus glanced at the peculiar character of the heresies, or rather of the heresy, of which he is about to give an account, Dr. Burton proceeds to attribute its early prevalence, and the consequent errors it introduced into the religion of so many Christian converts, to the length of time which he states to have elapsed between the conversion of St. Paul and his first journeying and preaching in Cilicia, Phrygia, Macedonia, Athens, and Corinth; during the latter part of which journey, namely, whilst he was at Corinth, he appears to have written the earliest of his Epistles—the first Epistle to the Thessalonians.

"It appears, therefore, that seventeen years elapsed between the first promulgation of the Gospel, and the date of the earliest writing which has come down to us. Those Epistles from which most evidence will be drawn concerning the early heresies, were written several years later; and I am speaking greatly within compass in saying, that the accounts which we have of heresies in the first century are taken from documents which were written twenty years after the promulgation of the Gospel. I have said that this fact is not always borne in mind by persons who are considering the events of the first century; and yet this period is unquestionably the most important which ever has occurred in the annals of mankind†."

In a subsequent passage he remarks respecting the period in question,

"If it had not been for an incidental expression of St.

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* *Inquiries*, p. 15. † p. 18.

Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, we should never have known that he passed three years in Arabia, immediately after his conversion, nor that fourteen more years elapsed before the end of his first journey. Whether he passed the greater part of this period in his native city, Tarsus, and what was the nature of his occupation, we seek in vain to learn. We could hardly conceive that the chosen Apostle of the Gentiles would be inclined or permitted to delay the great work to which he had been called, nor would it be easy to imagine that the other Apostles were idle in spreading that Gospel which they had been so solemnly ordered to preach amongst all nations. The death of St. James, and the imprisonment of St. Peter, by order of Herod, prove that they were not idle, and that the Gospel made its way. But still it was not till fourteen years after our Lord's ascension that St. Paul travelled for the first time, and preached the Gospel to the Gentiles. Nor is there any evidence that during that period the other Apostles passed the confines of Judæa*."

Professor Burton proceeds as follows with his very striking argument:

"During the time when we have supposed the Apostles to have confined themselves to Judæa, the Gospel was making rapid progress in several parts of the world. This is the point to which I now wish to direct your attention, and particularly to the fact that this progress was without co-operation and control of the Apostles: which may itself be sufficient to furnish a reason for the appearance of so many heresies, and for such strange corruptions in Christianity in those early times†."

He then marks by quotations from the New Testament, the *times* and *places*, when and where the Gospel must have been spread by those first converts‡; whose accounts of what they had heard and seen, Dr. Burton

* *Inquiries*, p. 20. † p. 21. ‡ pp. 22, 23.

contends must have preceded by so many years the journeyings and preachings of the Apostles; (John xii. 20, 21; Acts ii. 9, 11; viii. 1; xi. 19); and he concludes with the following summary of his argument:

"The Acts of the Apostles leave St. Paul at Tarsus, in the third year after his conversion (Acts ix. 30); and ten years afterwards we find him sick at Tarsus, when Barnabas went thither, and brought him to Antioch. During this period the Gospel was making its way in many parts of the three quarters of the world, though as yet none of the Apostles had travelled beyond Judæa: and when we come to consider the state of philosophy at that time, and the fashion which prevailed of catching at any thing new, and of uniting discordant elements into fanciful systems, we shall not be surprised to find the doctrine of the Gospel disguised and altered, and that according to the language of that age many new heresies were formed*."

Professor Burton closes this striking view (to which he will presently return) of the first progress of the Gospel through the reports of those who were not its authorised teachers, by pointing out what must have been *the effect* of such a state of things in Rome, Corinth, and Galatia†; and then shows that the argument applies *à fortiori* to places which had not the teaching of the Apostles to correct this evil till a later time. "How much more," says he, "must this have been the case in places which the Apostle did not visit so soon, and where as in Rome, the Gospel made its way for five-and-twenty years, with nothing but the zeal of individuals to spread it, and subject to all the fancies which those individuals might adopt‡."

The greatest dangers to which Christianity under such circumstances was exposed, arose from that great *Gnostic Heresy*, which was long the rival, and too often the corrupter, of its purer doctrines. Simon

* *Inquiries*, p. 24. † p. 26. ‡ p. 26.

Magus is considered by Professor Burton to have been the leader of that large division of the Gnostics who attempted to unite Gnosticism with Christianity; and the learned Professor has attempted the somewhat difficult task of reconciling with the truth, and with one another, the strange accounts of this Heresiarch told by the Fathers. When we remember the obscure claims of one Euphrates, surnamed Persicus, to be the father of Gnosticism, which have been advocated by Mosheim, it will appear most probable in itself, and most exculpatory of the Fathers, to consider both these personages to have been regarded in much the same light by some of the Fathers as Æolus and Dorus are now considered in the history of the Greek tribes; and that their ingenuity, not unmixed with something of the odium theologium, was let loose from all restraints, not so much against the Simon of the Scriptures, as against Magus, who also might have been called Persicus. The other heresiarchs, Menander and his disciples Basilides and Saturninus, and afterwards Marcion and Valentinus, were in their turn leaders of the Gnostic Heresy, to which also Cerinthus belonged, (to combat whose opinions St. John is said to have written his Gospel,) as did also the early sect of the Nicolaitans.

"When the reader of Ecclesiastical History," (continues Dr. Burton,) "comes to the second century, he finds it divided into schools, as numerously and zealously attended as any which Greece or Asia boast in their happiest days. He meets with names totally unknown to him before, which excited as much sensation as those of Aristotle or Plato. He hears of volumes having been written in support of this new Philosophy, not one of which has survived to our own day. His classical recollections are roused by finding an intimate connection between the doctrine of the Gnostics and of Plato: he hears of Jews who made even their exclusive creed bend to the new system: and what interests

him most is, that in every page he reads of the baneful effect which Gnosticism had upon Christianity, by adopting parts of the Gospel scheme, but adopting them only to disguise and deform them*."

The following extracts contain Professor Burton's view of the *Gnostic Dogmas*, together with some remarks on the sources from which they were derived:

"In attempting to give an account of these doctrines, I must begin with observing, what we shall see more plainly when we trace the causes of Gnosticism, that it was not by any means a new and distinct Philosophy, but made up of selections from almost every system. Thus we find in it the Platonic doctrine of ideas, and the notion that every thing in this lower world has a celestial and immaterial archetype. We find in it evident traces of that mystical and cabbalistic jargon which, after their return from captivity, deformed the religion of the Jews; and many Gnostics adopted the Oriental notion of two independent co-eternal Principles, the one the author of good, and the other of evil. Lastly, we find the Gnostic theology full of ideas and terms which must have been taken from the Gospel: and Jesus Christ, under some form or other, of æon, emanation, or incorporeal phantom, enters into all their systems, and is the means of communicating to them that knowledge which raised them above all other mortals, and entitled them to their peculiar name."

"The genius and very soul of Gnosticism was mystery: its end and object was to purify its followers from the corruptions of matter, and to raise them to a higher scale of being, suited only to those who were to become perfect by knowledge. We have a key to many parts of their system, when we know that they held matter to be intrinsically evil, of which, consequently, God could not be the author. Hence arose their fundamental tenet, that the Creator of the World, or Demiurgus, was not the same with the

* *Inquiries*, p. 31.

Supreme God, the Author of good, and the Father of Christ. Their system allowed some of them to call the Creator *God*, but the title most usually given was Demiurgus. Those who embraced the doctrine of two principles supposed the world to have been produced by the Evil Principle: and in most systems, the Creator of the World, and not the Father of Christ, was looked upon as the God of the Jews, and the Author of the Mosaic Law. Some, again, believed that angels were employed in creating the world: but all were agreed in maintaining that matter itself was not created; that it was eternal; and that it remained inactive till the world was formed out of it by the Creator."

"The Supreme God, according to the Gnostics, had dwelt from all eternity in a pleroma of inaccessible light; and beside the name of first Father or first Principle, they called him also Bythos, as if to denote the unfathomable nature of his perfections. This Being, by an operation purely mental, or by acting upon himself, produced two other beings of different sexes, from whom by a series of descents, more or less numerous according to different schemes, several pairs of beings were formed, who were called æons, from the periods of their existence before time was, or *emanations*, from the mode of their production. These successive æons, or emanations, appear to have been inferior each to the preceding; and their existence was indispensable to the Gnostic scheme, that they might account for the Creation of the world without making God the author of evil. These æons lived through countless ages with their first Father. But the system of emanation seems to have resembled that of concentric circles, and they gradually deteriorated as they approached nearer and nearer to the extremity of the pleroma. Beyond this pleroma was matter, inert and powerless, though co-eternal with the Supreme God, and, like him, without beginning. At length one of the æons passed the limits of the pleroma, and, meeting with matter, created the world after the form and model of an ideal world, which existed in the pleroma, or the mind of the Supreme God."

"Here it is that inconsistency is added to absurdity in the Gnostic scheme. For let the intermediate æons be as many as the wildest imagination could devise, still God was the remote, if not the proximate cause, of creation. Added to which we are to suppose that the Demiurgus formed the world without the knowledge of God, and that, having formed it, he rebelled against him. Here again, we find a strong resemblance to the oriental doctrine of two Principles, good and evil, or light and darkness. The two Principles were always at enmity with each other. God must have been conceived to be more powerful than matter, or an emanation from God could not have shaped or moulded it into form: yet God was not able to reduce matter to its primæval chaos, nor to destroy the evil which the Demiurgus had produced. What God could not prevent he was always endeavouring to cure: and here it is that the Gnostics borrowed so largely from the Christian scheme. The names, indeed, of several of their æons were evidently taken from terms which they had found in the Gospel. Thus we meet with Logos, Monogenes, Zoe, Ecclesia—all of them successive emanations from the Supreme God, and all dwelling in the pleroma. At length we meet with Christ and the Holy Ghost, as two of the last æons which were put forth. Christ was sent into the world to remedy the evil which the creative æon, or Demiurgus, had caused. He was to emancipate men from the tyranny of matter, or the evil principle; and by revealing to them the true God, who was hitherto unknown, to fit them, by a perfection and sublimity of knowledge, to enter the divine pleroma. To give this knowledge was the end and object of Christ's coming upon earth; and hence the inventors and believers of the doctrine assumed to themselves the name of *Gnostics**."

It was in agreement with the Gnostic doctrine of the utter malignity of matter, (which Professor Burton considers the very corner-stone of the Gnostic system, both as to the *knowledge* of divine things to which

* *Inquiries*, p. 38.

they pretended, and as to the morality, or, to speak more correctly, the *mortification*, which they inculcated,) that the different Gnostic sects "either denied that Christ had a real body at all, and held that he was an unsubstantial phantom; or, granting that there was a man called Jesus, the son of human parents, they believed that one of the æons, called Christ, quitted the pleroma and descended upon Jesus at his baptism*."

It was upon this belief of the utter malignity of matter, and upon the purifying nature of the divine knowledge to which they pretended, that the morality of the Gnostic sects, if it deserves to be so called, was entirely founded.

"If we would know the effect which the doctrines of the Gnostics had upon their moral conduct, we shall find that the same principle led to very opposite results. Though the Fathers may have exaggerated the errors of their opponents, it seems undeniable that many Gnostics led profligate lives, and maintained upon principle that such conduct was not unlawful. Others, again, are represented as practising great austerities, and endeavouring, by every means, to mortify the body and its sensual appetites. Both parties were actuated by the same common notion, that matter is inherently evil. The one thought the body, which is compounded of matter, ought to be kept in subjection, and hence they inculcated self-denial and the practice of moral virtue;" [if the learned Professor had said that they thought the body ought to be mortified, and for that purpose inculcated a system of asceticism, we think he would have been more correct;] "while others who had persuaded themselves that knowledge was everything, despised the distinctions of the moral law, which was given, as they said, not by the Supreme God, but by an inferior æon, or a principle of evil, who had allied himself to matter†."

Professor Burton gives a brief history of the pro-

* *Inquiries*, p. 39. † p. 41.

gress of Gnosticism, with a clear summary of the Gnostic dogmas, in the following passage:—

"The system, as I have said, was stated to have begun with Simon Magus; by which I would understand that the system of uniting Christianity with Gnosticism began with that heretic; for the seeds of Gnosticism, as we shall see presently, had been sown long before. What Simon Magus began was brought to perfection by Valentinus, who came to Rome in the former part of the second century; and what we know of Gnosticism is taken principally from writers who opposed Valentinus. Contemporary with him, there were many other Gnostic leaders, who held different opinions; but in the sketch which I have given, I have endeavoured to explain those principles which, under certain modifications, were common to all the Gnostics. That the Supreme God, or the Good Principle, was not the Creator of the World, but that it was created by an evil, or at least, an inferior being; that God produced from himself a succession of æons or emanations, who dwell with him in the pleroma; that one of these æons was Christ, who came upon earth to reveal the knowledge of the true God; that he was not incarnate, but either assumed an unsubstantial body, or descended upon Jesus at his baptism; that the God of the Old Testament was not the Father of Jesus Christ; that there was no resurrection or final judgment. This is an outline of the Gnostic tenets, as acknowledged by nearly all of them*."

Having given the above admirable outline of the great leading doctrines of the Gnostic Sects, or rather, of the Gnostic Schools, he next proceeds to trace Gnosticism itself to the three principal sources which we indicated at the beginning of this article. We proceed to give Dr. Burton's very clever and striking *History of Gnosticism*, (or, in other words, of Eclecticism and Syncretism,) in his own words.

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* *Inquiries*, p. 42.

"Some persons have deduced Gnosticism from the Eastern notion of a Good and Evil Principle; some from the Jewish Cabbala; and others from the doctrines of the later Platonists. Each of these systems is able to support itself by alleging very strong resemblances; and those persons have taken the most natural, and probably the truest course, who have concluded that all these opinions contributed to build up the monstrous system which was known by the name of Gnosticism.

"We will begin with considering that which undoubtedly was the oldest of the three, *the Eastern Doctrine* of a Good and Evil Principle. There is no fact connected with remote antiquity, which seems more certainly established, than that the Persian religion recognized two beings or principles, which, in some way or other, exercised an influence over the world and its inhabitants. To one they gave the name of Ormuzd, and invested him with the attributes of light and beneficence; the other they called Ahreman, and identified him with the notions of darkness and malignity. It has often been disputed, whether these two principles were considered as self-existing, co-eternal gods, or whether they were subject to a third and superior power. Plutarch evidently considered that both of them had a beginning, and that one of them at least would come to an end; for he says that Ormuzd took its rise from light, and Ahreman from darkness; so that light and darkness must have existed before them: and he adds, that the time would come when Ahreman would be destroyed, and an age of pure, unmixed happiness, would commence." "Upon the whole," (adds Professor Burton,) "I cannot but consider that those persons have taken a right view of this intricate subject, who represent the Persians as having been always worshippers of one Supreme God."

"It is true that the simplicity of their worship was soon corrupted; and the heavenly bodies, particularly the great source of light and heat, became the object of adoration. It is undoubted that the sun, under the name of Mithra, received from them the highest honours; and it will solve

many difficulties, if we conceive, that as their ideas became more gross, and the externals of religion occupied more of their attention, they came at length to identify the sun with the one Supreme God. There is evidence that a difference of opinion existed among the Magi upon this subject. Some of them embraced what has been called the dualistic system, or the notion that both Principles were uncreated and eternal; while others continued to maintain the ancient doctrine, either that one Principle was eternal and the other created, or that both proceeded from one supreme, self-existing source. This fundamental difference of opinion, together with the idolatry which was daily gaining ground, seems to have led to that reformation of religion which, it is agreed on all hands, was effected in Persia by Zoroaster."

Dr. Burton considers this reformation of religion to have taken place in the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

"There may" (he observes) "have been an identification of Mithra, or the sun, with the first cause; but to bring back his countrymen to an acknowledgment of a first cause, is worthy of the praises which have been bestowed on the name of Zoroaster."

He further remarks: "The oriental writers are fond of asserting that Zoroaster conversed with the captive Jews, and borrowed from them many of his ideas. The fact is, perhaps, chronologically possible; and Zoroaster may well have consulted with the Jews, if it be true, that the reform which he introduced consisted in establishing the doctrine" [Dr. Burton had before stated this to be a return to the ancient doctrine of Persia] "that the two Principles were subservient to a third, or higher Principle, by which they were originally created*."

Professor Burton proceeds to consider the second source of Gnosticism, "the mystical philosophy of the Jews, which has been known by the name of *Cabbala;*" and he tells us that "the Jewish Cabbala may

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* *Inquiries*, p. 48.

be loosely defined to be a mystical system, affecting the theory and practice of religion, founded upon oral tradition." Farther on, in the third Lecture, he gives the following account of the origin of the Cabbala, and of the spirit in which it was composed:

"That extraordinary and infatuated people" [he is speaking of the Jewish tendency to go after strange gods] "were from the earliest times inclined to engraft foreign superstitions upon their national worship; and when their idolatries at length caused the Almighty to destroy their city and send them captives to Babylon, they came in contact with a new system of superstition, different from that of Egypt or Canaan, which had before ensnared them. The Jews who returned from Babylon, at the end of their captivity, would be sure to bring with them some of the rites and customs of the people whom they had left; but they also found the evil already waiting for them at their doors. The mixed people, who settled in Samaria, when Shalmenezer had depopulated it, set up a variety of idolatries, and joined them to the worship of the God of the Jews. (2 Kings xvii. 24—34.) Most of the idolaters were from the nations beyond the Euphrates: and this heterogeneous mixture of creeds continued in the country when the Jews returned from captivity. We know from Scripture, that of those who were the first to return, many formed marriages with the people of the neighbourhood (Ezra ix. 2); and the zeal with which Ezra endeavoured to prevent their intercourse, showed that he considered the religion of his country to be in danger. We learn also from Josephus, that many Jews continued to live in the countries beyond the Euphrates: he speaks of them as many myriads; and he shows, in several places, that they kept up an intercourse with their countrymen at Jerusalem; they attended the festivals; they paid the didrachma to the temple, and sent their pedigree to be registered at Jerusalem: all which shows that a constant communication was kept up between the Jews and those Eastern nations, where the religion of the Magi had lately

been reformed by Zoroaster. In one sense, the Jews had greatly profited by their captivity in Babylon, and we read no more of the whole nation falling into idolatry. The Persians, indeed, were not idolatrous; and it was from them that the greatest effect was produced upon the opinions of the Jews. It seems certain that their notions concerning angels received a considerable tincture from those of the Persians; and the three principal sects of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, show how far religious differences were allowed among them, and yet the unity of the faith was considered to be maintained. The Cabbala contains many doctrines concerning angels, and other mystical points, which can only have come from an Eastern quarter; and the secondary, or allegorical interpretation of the Scripture, with which the Cabbala abounds, began soon after the return from the captivity."

Dr. Burton gives rather too slight a sketch of the principles of the Cabbala, and remarks on its resemblance to those of the Gnostics:

"They" [the Cabbalists] "did not hold the eternity of matter with the Greeks; nor, with the Persians, had they recourse to two opposite principles; they cut the knot which they could not solve; and they taught, that God, being a Spirit, who pervaded all space, the universe also was not material, but spiritual, and proceeded by emanation from God. The first emanation was called in their language *the first man*, or the first begotten of God: and he was made the medium of producing nine other emanations, or *sephiroth*, from which the universe was formed. All this is highly mystical; and it is melancholy to see how the human mind can fall when it attempts the highest flights. Imperfectly as I have described the system of the Cabbalists, it will be seen that it bears no small resemblance to that of the Gnostics, who interposed several æons, or emanations, between the Supreme God and the creation of the world."

Respecting the secondary and mystical interpreta-

tion of the Scriptures, introduced by the Cabbalists, and carried so much farther by the Gnostics, he says:

"With the Gnostics, to interpret Scripture literally, was the exception; and they only did it when it suited their purpose. Their rule was to extort a hidden meaning from every passage, and to make almost every letter contain a mystical allusion. There undoubtedly was a Cabbala, or secret doctrine, among the Jews, before we hear anything of the Gnostic philosophy: the latter, therefore, could not have contributed to produce the former*."

It will be obvious, from the above statements, that the Gnostics were as much indebted to the Cabbala, as the Cabbala had been to the Oriental doctrines.

"The notion of emanations, as has been observed by Professor Matter, is the essential feature of the Cabbala; and since there is no warrant for this in the Bible, nor did it appear in the prevailing schemes of heathen philosophy, he very naturally deduces it from the East, where many of the Magi taught that everything emanated from God, the Fountain of Light."

Professor Burton connects the second source of Gnosticism with the third, and, as he considers it, the greatest, or at least the most immediate source of Gnosticism, namely, *Platonism*, in the following passage:

"It is natural for us to ask, how the Cabbala came to receive a system of philosophy so far removed from the simplicity of the Mosaic, and how the opinions of the Jews, hitherto so exclusive and so little known, could produce any effect upon a system which, at the time of which we are speaking, was spread over great part of the world. A solution of these questions may probably be found by a consideration of the Platonic doctrines."

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* *Inquiries*, p. 54.

These doctrines he considers to have been "the principal source of Gnosticism," and to have had an effect "upon the Cabbalistic philosophy of the Jews*." These assertions Professor Burton makes good, both by an examination of the *internal evidence*, that is, of the leading principles and general system of Platonism, as compared with the principles and systems of the Cabbalists and the Gnostics, and by a detail of the *external evidence*, that is, of the gradual formation of the School of Plato at Alexandria, of the various schools and sects which poured their opinions and dogmas into that great reservoir, and of the philosophic schools and theosophic sects which proceeded from that source. Beginning at the origin of them all, the disputed question of the source of evil, Professor Burton draws the attention of his readers to this great question, and shows clearly that in the Greek philosophy, (as well as in the Greek mythology and cosmogony,) the *origin of evil* was the stumbling-block that it appears to have been to every other system, imaginative or rational; and that the Greeks had their own way of getting over the difficulty.

"The Grecian philosophers" (says Professor Burton,) "did not adopt the system of emanation. They all held that matter was eternal; and such, undoubtedly, was the opinion of Plato. This was the expedient by which all the philosophers thought to rescue God from being the author of evil, forgetting, as it appears, that at the same time they limited his omnipotence, and made Him, though not the author of evil, yet Himself subject to its influence; for a being who is all good, and yet restricted in his power, is undoubtedly subject to evil. Here, then, was the basis—the false, the unphilosophical basis—on which all the Grecian sages built their systems. Matter was co-eternal with God; and the world was formed either by matter acting upon itself, or being acted upon by God. The school of Epicurus made

* *Inquiries*, p. 57.

matter act upon itself, and the Deity was reduced to a name. The Stoics and Peripatetics believed God to have acted upon matter; but it was from necessity, and not from choice."

"Plato had already adopted a system more worthy of the Deity, and conceived that God acted upon matter of His own free-will, and, by calling order out of disorder, formed the world. Plato certainly did not believe the world to be eternal, though such a notion is ascribed to Aristotle. Plato held the eternity of matter; but he believed the arrangement and harmony of the universe to be the work of the Deity. Here begins the peculiar intricacy of the Platonic system. Everything, except the Deity, which exists in heaven or in earth, whether the object of sense or purely intellectual, was believed to have had a beginning. There was a time when it did not exist; but there never was a time when the *Idea*, i. e., the form or archetype, did not exist in the mind of the Deity. Hence we find so many writers speak of three principles being held by Plato, the Deity, the idea, and matter. It is difficult to explain the Platonic doctrine of *ideas*, without running into mysticism or obscurity; but, perhaps, if we lay aside, for a time, the doctrines of the ancients, and take our own notions of the Deity, we may be able to form some conception of Plato's meaning."

"We believe that there was a time when the world which we inhabit, and everything which moves upon it, did not exist; but we cannot say that there ever was a time when the works of creation were not present to the mind of the Deity. There may, therefore, be the image of a thing, though as yet it has received no material form; or, to use the illustration of the Platonists, the seal may exist without the impression. Plato supposed these images to have a real existence, and gave to them the name of form, example, archetype, or *idea;* and the use which he made of them constitutes the peculiar character of the Platonic philosophy. He saw that these ideas not only preceded the creation of the world, but must have been present to the Deity from

all eternity; and he could assign no other place than the mind of the Deity*."

This is, perhaps, as simple a statement as can be given of that celebrated piece of mysticism which, for a long time, intoxicated the world. Those who wish to examine it under every form (Plato's, the Platonists and the Stoics, Philo's, the Gnostics, and the Platonist Fathers), and to investigate the streams through which this mystic dogma appears to have descended from the most ancient times, (Greek, Egyptian, or Babylonian,) will refer to the learned notes of Professor Burton, and to the various sources (Brucker, Cudworth, Mosheim, Lardner, Neander, Wolf, Beausobre, Matter, and others) to which the Introduction, the Text, and the Notes of Dr. Burton's work refer his readers. It appears to us of great importance to separate the ancient tradition itself from its mythologic, and cosmogenic, and mystic, and philosophic glosses. Considered as the foundation of the mysticism on which Plato has bestowed the united arts of the mystic and the rhetorician, Plato's claims to originality are not greater than those of others who adopted this venerable tradition; except in so far as he may be said to have made it his own property by the labour he bestowed upon the splendid clouds with which he surrounded it. Considered as metaphysical philosophy, as inferences from the nature of man to the nature of God, however highly we respect the tradition itself, which is the real foundation of the philosophy, we cannot think highly of the objective philosophy which Schleiermacher and Professor Sewell discover in Plato's doctrine of Ideas. But, at present, it is rather our object to exhibit proofs that Gnosticism was a direct consequence of the mysticism of Plato, than to examine into the metaphysical soundness or moral value of Platonism. We return,

* *Inquiries*, p. 62.

therefore, to the internal evidences adduced by Professor Burton, to prove that Gnosticism was derived principally from Platonism:

"The Gnostics, as we have seen, agreed with Plato in making matter co-eternal with God. They also believed that the material world was formed after an eternal and intellectual *idea*. This peculiar and mystical notion is the very soul of Platonism; and we learn from Irenæus, that it was held by all the Gnostics. Both parties also believed in an intermediate order of beings between the Supreme God and the inhabitants of the earth; these beings were supposed by both to have proceeded from the mind or reason of God: and it may furnish a clue to much of the Gnostic philosophy, if we suppose the æons of the Gnostics to be merely a personification of the ideas of Plato; or we may say generally, that the Gnostics formed their system of æons by combining the intellectual beings of the Platonic philosophy with the angels of the Jewish Scriptures."

"There is, indeed, one material difference between the system of Plato and that of the Gnostics. According to the former, God ordered the intellectual beings which he had produced to create the world; and He delegated this work to them, that He might not be Himself the author of evil. But, according to the Gnostics, the Demiurgus, one of the inferior æons, created the world without the knowledge of God. This is, perhaps, as rational an hypothesis as that of Plato himself: and the one may have very naturally grown into the other, during the frequent agitation of the question concerning the origin of evil. It may be observed, also, that the constant hostility which existed between the Supreme God and the creative æon, or Demiurgus, does not find any parallel in the Platonic philosophy. This was probably borrowed from the Eastern doctrine of a good and evil Principle; and what the Scriptures say of Satan, the great adversary of man, may also have contributed to form the same doctrine*."

* *Inquiries*, p. 64.

The evil which Plato did, and of which he set the example to his followers, was his presuming to dogmatize on the mystic causes of evil. If Plato was at liberty to invent mystic causes for evil, his followers, the Gnostics, would claim the same right to modify his inventions. If Plato might set the example of dogmatizing on such subjects, it was to be expected that his followers would follow that example, after their own manner. The fashion which Plato set, caused the sound, objective philosophy of Socrates, to be superseded by the unsound, subjective mysticism of Pythagoras. And yet Plato is held up to us as the very fountain-head of sound objective philosophy!

We must refer our readers to the pages of Dr. Burton's work for a brief, clear, and striking account of the *external evidence* that Gnosticism was an offshoot from the School of Plato at Alexandria*, and must return to Dr. Burton's estimate of the effects produced by Gnosticism upon Christianity, and of the circumstances which prepared the way to those effects.

Nearly half a century has passed since the author of these pages on the Philosophy of Socrates and Mysticism of Plato was in the same class at school with the late Dr. Burton. It might be said of him that "from his cradle he was a scholar, and a ripe and good one." Edward Burton was not more than twelve years old at the time of which I am speaking, but his extraordinary love of intellectual labour was already eminently conspicuous, and placed him, *facile princeps*, at the head of his class. The same qualities are shown in the collection and arrangement of the valuable materials in his book, and in the well-considered support which his work is calculated to give to the Church, of which he was so distinguished a member. This support was, I am convinced, dictated by a deep and

* *Inquiries*, pp. 65—70.

conscientious wish to promote the cause of religion, and virtue, and happiness; and I beg to express my regret for having attacked (in a work which has long been withdrawn from publication) some parts of Dr. Burton's theory. Farther examination of his Lectures has convinced me that the line of argument to which we are about to return, (which I shall continue to give in the very words of Dr. Burton,) tends equally to truth, faith, and charity, to a sound estimate of the benefits which Christianity has conferred on the world, to a better understanding of the more mysterious doctrines of our Church, to greater charity towards those who differ from us, accompanied with greater power to convince them of their error. We cannot prove the truths we are asserting more clearly than by continuing to give Dr. Burton's argument in his own words, intending to draw our readers' attention to the full force of the argument, as it bears upon Platonism, Gnosticism, and Christianity, in our next Essay:

"Most persons must have been struck with the opening of St. John's Gospel; not only for the high and mysterious doctrines which it propounds so abruptly, and in a manner so entirely different from the other evangelists, but also for the use of a totally new term, which none of those evangelists had used before*."

After stating this fact in the above striking manner, Dr. Burton proceeds to examine the texts in the Old and New Testaments which bear the nearest resemblance to the use of the term Logos in St. John†, and concludes that "none of these instances are sufficiently certain to prove that the Logos," (as there employed,) "was intended personally for the Son of God‡."

"Let an unprejudiced person," (Dr. Burton continues,) "after reading the rest of the New Testament, then proceed

* *Inquiries*, p. 204. † p. 207. ‡ p. 208.

to the writings of St. John; and he cannot fail to observe that there is a term in St. John's Gospel with which he was not before familiar. What, then, was it which led St. John to employ this term? He uses it without any explanation, and he evidently supposes that his readers would understand it; and the natural inference would be, that the persons for whom his Gospel was written were in the habit of speaking of Jesus Christ as the Logos, or Word of God*."

After having given the above statement of the question, Dr. Burton proceeds to its solution; and first mentioning the dates of some of the apostolic writings, Dr. Burton proceeds:—

"We may conclude, therefore, with tolerable certainty, that all the writings of the New Testament, except those of St. John, were composed and circulated before the year 66; and I should be inclined to add, that as far as we can argue for this evidence, it was not then common with Christians to speak of Christ as the Logos, or Word of God. Concerning the date of St. John's Gospel, very different opinions have been given. Some have placed it in the year 68, others thirty years later; and those who follow the latter calculation have much more reason on their side. A similar diversity exists concerning the date of St. John's Epistle: but I would observe, with respect to his Epistles, that the personal sense of the term Logos is much less marked and certain than it is in his Gospel. No one, perhaps, would rest an argument on the controverted verse, where we read the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and excepting this passage, there is only one other at the opening of the First Epistle, which would at all be quoted as maintaining the personality of the Logos. Here also the expression concerning the Word of Life might be considered doubtful; and without taking any further notice of St. John's Epistles, we may, therefore consider the opening of the Gospel as the earliest writing in which Christ is unequivocally spoken of as the Logos or Word†."

* *Inquiries*, p. 209. † p. 210.

Professor Burton adds in a note that the Revelation of St. John, (including the passage, Rev. xix. 13,) was probably written but a short time before his death. Professor Burton proceeds thus with his argument:—

"It appears, from what has been said above, that thirty years may have elapsed between the date of this Gospel and any other of the apostolical writings: a fact which has perhaps not been sufficiently attended to, but which is of the greatest consequence in the present discussion. We must remember that Christianity itself was then in its infancy: and every term which was appropriated to the Gospel was either altogether new, or at least new in its application. We should not, therefore, be surprised, if at the end of a period much less than that of thirty years, a term should have become common, which had not even been heard of at the beginning of that period*."

Here Dr. Burton shows that the use of the terms *Lamb of God*, *Angel of the Church*, *Gospel of Christ*, grew up in this way.

"The question, however, naturally presents itself, how came the term Logos, in the course of these thirty years, to acquire a sense which had not been attached to it before? This is the most difficult part of our subject: and it is here, perhaps, that the friends, as well as the enemies of revelation have not always intrenched themselves on the safest ground. The charge has been brought that the Platonic Doctrines, and even Platonism, as it was taught by Gnostic Heretics, was the cause of St. John speaking of Christ as the Word of God. On the other hand, the defenders of our faith have maintained that Christianity was not in the smallest degree affected by the doctrines of Plato. If it be meant that the Apostles did not suffer any particle of Heathen Philosophy to corrupt the doctrines of the Gospel, never, I conceive, was a more demonstratable truth pronounced by the Apostles themselves; but I cannot see,

* *Inquiries*, p. 210.

though some persons will think it a rash and ill-advised concession,—I cannot see why we should not allow, or even why we should not even expect, that the language and phraseology of the Gospel would bear some marks of the philosophy which it had to encounter*.

"In order to explain myself, I must make some remarks upon the use of the term Logos in the Philosophy of Plato. Whoever has studied the works of that speculative writer, must be aware that the mind or Reason of the Deity held a very conspicuous place in his theological system." [Dr. Burton tells us in a note that the Brahmins of India hold that God is the Word of knowledge, and speak of the mind of the World.] "The mind of the Deity was the seat of those Ideas—those eternal but unsubstantial prototypes of things, from which the material creation received its qualities and forms. Hence we find the work of creation sometimes attributed to God, sometimes to His Mind or Reason, sometimes to the Ideas. But we must carefully remember," insists Dr. Burton, "that Plato never spoke of the reason of God as a distinctly existing person: it was only a mode or relation in which the operations of the Deity might be contemplated. There are passages," (Dr. Burton allows,) "in the works of Plato, which might mislead us; and which might be quoted without a careful observation, as proving that Plato ascribed a distinct existence to a second cause or God, begotten of the First. He speaks, indeed, of God being the Father of a Being who is God, the Son of God, and even only begotten: but it is quite plain that he is here speaking of the intellectual world, the first substantial effect of that creative faculty which the *Ideas* in the mind of God possessed. This intellectual world has no material existence. It was seated in the Mind of the Deity, and hence it was often identified with the Reason of God†."

Dr. Burton proceeds to distinguish the different mystical views attached to the term Logos‡ by the

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* *Inquiries, p.* 212. † p. 213. ‡ p. 214.

Stoics, later Platonists, Philo, and the Gnostics*. Respecting the latter, he says:—

"One of the first steps in the Gnostic Philosophy seems to have been to personify the operations of the mind of the Deity. We are not informed of the names of the æons in the earliest systems of the Gnostics: but Valentinus taught that God acted upon Ennoia, *i. e.*, upon his own conception, and from thence proceeded the successive generations of æons. One of these æons was termed Logos: and we may say with truth, that between the genuine followers of Plato, and the corrupters of his doctrine, the Gnostics, the whole learned world at the time of our Saviour's death, from Athens to Alexandria, and from Rome to Asia Minor, was beset with philosophic systems, in every one of which the term Logos held a conspicuous place."

"I pointed out in my first lecture the importance of the fact, that nearly fifteen years elapsed between our Saviour's death and St. Paul's first apostolic journey. During the greater part of this time, Simon Magus and his followers were spreading their doctrines, and I have shown that Christ, as one of the æons, held a conspicuous place in their theological system. There is reason, therefore, to suppose that in many countries, before they were visited by an Apostle, the name of Christ was introduced in a corruption of the Platonic doctrines; and that the Logos, which was used by Plato for the Reason, was now changed to signify the Word of God."

Dr. Burton again insists on the clear distinction between the Logos of the Platonists and the term Logos, as applied to Christ, and adds:—

"If St. Paul used the term, he would rather be likely to use it so, as to draw his converts from thinking of the Pla-

* See also Dr. Burton's Notes at the end of his Work, where the data on which he argues in his text, that is, the facts in each case, are stated with a large learning and great moderation.

tonic Logos, and to turn them to the engrafted Word which was able to save their souls*."

Proceeding with his argument, Professor Burton continues:—

"Then comes the thirty years between the death of St. Paul and the date of St. John's Gospel. Now, I cannot see that there is anything unnatural in supposing that in this long interval of time, the Platonic, or rather the Gnostic doctrines, had become so well known to Christians, that terms and expressions from that philosophy were accommodated to the Gospel. It could hardly, indeed, have been otherwise. Many had been familiar with Platonism before they had become Christians†. The minds of men may have been in this frame when St. John wrote his Gospel." "We are told that Cerinthus and Ebion had been unwearied in spreading their new view of Gnosticism; and when St. John returned from banishment he may have found that the true believers had adopted a Gnostic term, though attaching to it very different ideas, and spoke of Christ as the Logos of God‡."

Professor Burton shows, in a note, that the above is nearly the view taken by Michaelis, and states the conclusion he derives from the above facts in the following words:

"According to this view, St. John was as far as possible from being the first to apply the term Logos to Christ. I suppose him to have found it so universally applied, that he did not attempt to stop the current of popular language, but only kept it in its proper channel, and guarded it from extraneous corruption§." "If we take this view of the beginning of St. John's Gospel, we may be inclined to believe the very prevalent tradition that he directed it against the heresies of Cerinthus and Ebion. It would be more correct, perhaps, to say that he wrote it against all the Gnostics||."

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* *Inquiries*, p. 217. † p. 218. ‡ p. 219.
§ p. 220. || p. 224.

Dr. Burton quotes the following words from Michaelis, as concurring in the view he takes of St. John's Gospel:—

"St. John himself really declared, though not in express terms, that he wrote with a view of confuting errors maintained by the Gnostics *."

Assuredly there is nothing in Dr. Burton's theory respecting the application of the term Logos to Christ to astonish the Scholar, or to perplex the Divine, or to alarm the Christian. Doubtless, there is an *absolute* meaning in each of the texts of Scripture quoted by Dr. Burton, which is as true now as it was true then; but, in order to get at this absolute meaning, we must attend to the *relative* meaning of the text, as it applied to the opinions, practices, and persons to whom and to which it primarily related. If this is confessedly true respecting the texts of Scripture which are connected with Judaism, why should it not be true in the case of texts which relate to Gnosticism? And why should not a knowledge of the history, philosophy, and language of the Gentile Converts to Christianity be useful to the Scholar, Divine, and Christian, in explaining all the texts of Scripture which Dr. Burton has illustrated, with equal learning, moderation, and respect for the Articles of our Church? But we propose to treat this subject farther in our next Essay.

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* *Inquiries*, p. 225.

WORD OF GOD.

We propose in our present article, (which we intend as a sequel to that on *Gnosticism*,) to consider the Word of God as the Cure of Evil; and to inquire what were the evils for which Christianity was *primarily* and *immediately* set forth as the cure. Truth is too often obscured and faith perplexed by the non-adoption of this mode of treatment. It is because men do not begin by inquiring *what were the evils* for which Christianity was primarily set forth as the cure, that they fail to obtain sound views, not only respecting what were the *objects*, the *means*, and the *effects* of Christianity, when the Religion of Christ was first set forth as the cure of the moral evils under which the world was labouring,—that is, clear views respecting the character, the history, and the doctrines of Christ, so far as they were intended to affect the men of *those* times, and to operate great changes in the world; but that they consequently fail to obtain sound views respecting *what are the evils* for which Christianity is still the remedy; that is, what are the objects and what are the means, and what should be the effects, of Christianity at the present time. Indeed, such sad mistakes have ensued respecting the very spirit of Christianity, from not attending sufficiently to the *primary object*, and the *primary means*, and the *primary effects* of Christianity, as have caused Religion to be too often employed in perpetuating the very evils, though under other forms, which it was intended to remedy; and even when that greatest of errors has been reformed, such mistakes have caused what was peculiar to the primary objects and the primary

means of Christianity to be confounded with the hopes and the duties of Christianity in other times. It is, we repeat, by inquiring in the first place, what *were* the evils for which Christianity was primarily and immediately intended to be the cure, that we shall best discover what *are* the evils for which Christianity is still the remedy; and it is by inquiring what *were* the means by which Christianity overcame those evils, that we may hope to understand more clearly what *are* the means which Christianity possesses for resisting and overcoming like evils in the present times; and it will be found that by adopting this mode of treatment, division and order, we are most likely to remove from our own minds, and from the minds of others, difficulties and doubts respecting the character, the history and the doctrines of Christ.

Our articles on *Gnosticism* and *Greek Philosophy* will have prepared our readers to consider Heathen Sensualism and Gnostic Mysticism as two of the principal evils with which Christianity had primarily and immediately to contend. A third evil, equal in magnitude and importance to either of those we have mentioned, was Jewish Ceremonialism. Respecting the objects, means, and effects of Christianity, as opposed to Jewish Ceremonialism, we must refer our readers to other works; but respecting Heathen Sensualism and Gnostic Mysticism, it is our intention to lay before our readers the inferences which appear to us to follow from the facts which were set forth in our articles on *Gnosticism* and *Greek Philosophy*. Indeed, we cannot give a more practical close to our work, than by drawing attention to the three forms of evil over which Christianity obtained her first triumphs, —*Heathen Sensualism*, *Gnostic Mysticism*, and *Jewish Ceremonialism;* not only as suggesting evidences of the great benefits Christianity then wrought, and of the services which the Religion of Christ has since

rendered to the cause of improvement and civilization, but as suggesting the benefits and services which are still to be expected from Christianity, to wit, in the farther promotion of those great objects. For it is with *Sensualism*, *Mysticism*, and *Ceremonialism*, though under other forms, that Christianity has still to contend; and it is, we repeat, by examining the three forms of evil with which Christianity had first to contend, (the primary objects, the primary means, and the primary effects, of Christianity,) that we shall better understand the diseases and the remedies; and that we shall be more able to guard against that most insidious form of evil, when the disease is mistaken for the remedy,—when Satan appears as angel of light, and when there is imminent danger that the light that is in us should become darkness.

When we speak of the *Heathen Sensualism* with which Christianity had to contend, we are not speaking of what Heathenism was in the times of Homer and Hesiod, of Lycurgus, or Solon; nor of what Heathenism was becoming during that intermediate period when Pindar, Æschylus, and Euripides gradually undermined the mythology they were in part supporting; nor are we speaking of what Heathenism had become when the wit and humour of Aristophanes, and the enthusiasm and eloquence of Plato, shook the temples of Greece to their foundations. We are speaking of that still more degraded thing which Heathenism was, when Ovid and Martial, Juvenal and Suetonius, may be taken as fairly representing the religious power and the moral effects of Heathenism—to wit, in that utter ruin of religious principle and moral practice for which Christianity was the cure. It cannot be too often repeated, that it is a matter of fact capable of the fullest and clearest evidence, that religion and morals, private and public principle, youth and age, manhood and womanhood, were one mass of ruin when the Religion of

Christ came to raise human nature from the filth of Heathen Sensualism, and to place man once more erect in the path of duty. It is not till we have obtained some knowledge of the facts of that abyss of degradation, sinking deeper and deeper—of that flood of misery, rising higher and higher—that we can form an estimate of the *objects*, the *means*, and the *effects* of Christianity—of the character, the history, and the doctrines of Christ—in so far as Christianity was intended to be the cure of Heathen Sensualism. It is not necessary to refer to Christ's second coming for an explanation of the terrible imagery in the Apostles' language: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory." It is, we repeat, when turning from the ruins of the temples of Babylon and Egypt, of Greece and Rome, with the legends and rites, the principles and customs which they recall, that we understand the importance of that commandment in the Law of Moses, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image—thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them;" and that we feel the value of Christ's extension of that great principle, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." It is when turning from the Sensualism of the East, with its wanton emblems—from the Sensualism of Egypt, with its lascivious rites—from the Sensualism of Greece, with its worship of Venus and Mysteries of Bacchus—and, above all, from the Sensualism of Rome, that common-sewer into which all the Sensualisms of the World had been poured—that we understand what is meant by *Heathen*

Sensualism—to wit, that *Sensualism in Religion* which associates the Divine Nature with "body, parts, and passions," the opposite of that "infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness," that "one living and true God," which the First Article of our Church, in agreement with and in exposition of the Scriptures, sets forth for our belief; secondly, that *Sensualism in Morals* (so inseparably connected with Sensualism in Religion) which had degraded human nature below that of the brute beast or savage animal, connecting the extremes of lasciviousness and blood-guiltiness, in fearful union, in the nature of man and in the history of the world. It is when we have the disease, Heathen Sensualism, plainly before us, and are aware of all the evils it implied, that we are in a position to estimate the remedy. It is then that we understand why God was set forth to the convert from Heathenism (that is, from the *Superstition* and the *Immorality* which Heathen Sensualism implied,) as his Creator, his Redeemer, and his Sanctifier, as his Father, his Teacher, and his Guide, as requiring that our bodies, minds, and affections should be living Temples of His Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.

Much evil arises from approaching the more mysterious doctrines of Religion, for the first time, (at least, for the purpose of serious consideration,) in a dogmatic or a sceptical tone of mind. Years of unprofitable study or mischievous controversy, views of religion at once narrowed and embittered, an estimate of Christianity unworthy of its catholic spirit and practical objects, a tendency on the one hand to dogmatism, and on the other hand to scepticism—each of these evils provoking and aggravating the other—surely neither of these is the spirit in which the Religion of Christ should be approached—surely it is time that these doctrines should be approached in a free and *open spirit*, and with [illegible] reference to their primary

objects and primary effects; and surely the power and efficacy of these doctrines is best understood, by taking them in their simplest meaning. It is when we represent to ourselves the convert from Heathen Sensualism receiving "the Catholic Faith," not as matter for philosophic speculation and theological discussion, but as the means of how great a change from darkness to light, that we understand something of the power and efficacy which was then found in what we are now too apt to regard in a very different spirit. We, indeed, are placed under far happier circumstances, but having their own peculiar difficulties and dangers; and do we act wisely in attempting to throw down the ladder by which we have ascended? Should we not act more wisely by inquiring whether the same means may not be so employed as to deliver us still farther from the same evils? Are not the evils over which Christianity obtained its first great triumphs, types of like evils, ever recurring, under other forms; and may not these doctrines of Christianity, if received in spirit and in truth, be ever the means of resisting those evils? Whilst human nature continues what it has been and still is, can we hope that a final victory over Sensualism, Mysticism, and Ceremonialism will be achieved, or that the battle will not again and again have to be fought? Every man's conscience will tell him that the yearly exhortation of our Church (in one of the most beautiful of her services,) is not superfluous—"to cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light;" or, as it is expressed in another part of the same service, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." Do not facts and reason show that, in the primitive periods of Christianity, when the Religion of Christ was yet contending with Heathen Sensualism, (that is, with sensualism in morals, deeply and inextricably connected with sensualism in religion,)

that the more mysterious doctrines of our Religion did more, even than its pure morality, to free the world from the closely united evils of sensual belief and sensual principles? And if, to this fair reference to facts and reasons, as displayed by the primitive history of our faith, (proving that, in those times, it was indeed "before all things necessary" to the convert from Heathen Sensualism "that he should hold the Catholic Faith,") we add an estimate of those doctrines free both from scepticism and dogmatism, and doing justice to their meaning, intention, and effect, we may still hope to derive practical piety from what has too often been made matter of theological speculation and theological bitterness.

But Primitive Christianity had to contend, not only with Heathen Sensualism, but with *Gnostic Mysticism*. Where Gnosticism had superseded Heathenism, it was a natural, but not a sound reaction; a reaction from Sensualism to Mysticism—from a devotion to the Senses, to a devotion to the Imagination. But each of these was a species of Idolatry.

It was in Egypt that this reaction from Sensualism to Mysticism (which we have described in our article on *Gnosticism*,) was wrought out. No other climate, race and country, religion, philosophy, and government, time, place, and circumstance, could be so fitted for the development of Mysticism, as was Egypt when Gnosticism arose. A climate as incentive to mystic contemplation, as to sensual indulgence, was as favourable to a transition from the one to the other, as to this strange union of both. A race at once stimulated and exhausted, equally prone to vicious indulgence and to superstitious terrors, divided between these extremes, was fitted for this unsound mean. A country of which one half was given up to the hurry of life, and the other half to the stillness of death, invited men to *pass* from the one to the other, or to linger on the

confines of both. A religion as imaginative as it was sensual—a philosophy of which it is sufficient to say that it was Platonism—a government as repressive of all sound activity, as it was provocative of bitter thought—time, place, and circumstance—all concurred for the development of that spiritual sensualism, the twofold characteristics of which are summed up in one word, Mysticism. Such was the strange combination of warring elements from which Gnosticism arose. Now, we know that the then civilized world, Greece and Rome, Europe and Asia, exhausted by violent passions and deep corruption, and finding little relief or comfort in the worn-out rites of shallow superstitions, was prepared to rush blindly into deeper feel ings and higher imaginations, or, in other words, from the Idolatry of the Senses into an Idolatry of the Imagination, from Sensualism into Mysticism.

It was Christianity which arrested that reaction, and saved the world from a tyranny, if possible, more formidable than the tyranny of the senses. It is not more certain that the Law of Moses, at an earlier period, had arrested the grosser species of Idolatry, which worshipped graven images, (that Idolatry which, taking its rise in Egypt, for the religion of Babylon was more spiritual, had spread from Egypt, as from a centre, over an intellectually subject world,) than that Christianity arrested that more refined species of Idolatry, the Idolatry of the Imagination, which Gonsticism—as we have shown in our article on Gnosticism—was spreading from the School of Plato, in Egypt, over the whole civilized world. That each was Idolatry—the one of the Senses, the other of the Imagination—that both withdrew the mind from sound piety and real virtue—that if Sensualism was wrong, Mysticism was not right—has, we trust, been made sufficiently evident. But it can be shown that it was equally the object of Christianity to resist the tyranny of the

Imagination as the tyranny of the Senses, to deliver the world from Gnostic Mysticism as from Heathen Sensualism. No estimate can be sound which does not recognize both these objects; that is, which does not look upon Christianity as the opponent of Gnosticism as well as of Heathenism, of Mysticism as well as of Sensualism, or which does not also bear in mind that the Religion of Christ was as firmly opposed to Jewish Ceremonialism, as to either of the other great evils with which Christianity so long and so successfully contended. And as Heathenism, Gnosticism, and Judaism are types of ever-recurring evils, it will be seen that a right understanding of Gnosticism not only throws much light on the means by which Mysticism was first resisted by the Religion of Christ, but upon the means by which, under other forms and circumstances, Mysticism is still to be resisted. Nor let it be objected, that the records of Gnostic Mysticism have been so destroyed or corrupted as not to afford a clear lesson. This objection is not insuperable; inasmuch as we have all the details of Plato's Mysticism in our hands, and, by comparing them with the remains of Gnosticism, can estimate the evil at its source. Indeed, it is impossible to have better means of estimating the leading elements of Gnostic Mysticism, or indeed of all Mysticism, than by a diligent study of the writings of Plato—that is, of those parts of the writings of Plato which contain the Mysticism of Pythagoras; for in this case, also, the celebrity of the scholar has obscured the real claims of the master, and the Mysticism of Pythagoras has been lost in the Mysticism of Plato. Taking the Mysticism of Plato as the foundation of the Mysticism of the Gnostics, we will point out a few marked distinctions between Mysticism and Religion, between Gnosticism and Christianity.

Two of the most fundamental doctrines of Religion

are the Creation of the World and a Future State; as these doctrines are opposed to the two worst forms of atheism,—to the theory of the materialist and the practice of the sensualist. Now, if we compare the *numerous* and *minute* particulars given by Plato (in the *Timæus* and the *Republic*) respecting the Creation of the World and a Future State, with the few, simple and sublime notices of these great questions in the Scriptures, we shall not fail to discern a striking difference between Religion and Mysticism, between Gnosticism and Christianity. Compare the simple and sublime words, "And God said Let there be light; and there was light"—with the minute particulars which Plato gives in the *Timæus*, not only of the whole work of Creation, but of the most secret counsels of the Creator. Compare what Christ tells us of a future state: "Behold the day cometh when the Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth—then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father"—with the innumerable minute particulars of a future state, and of a past state, together with all the absurdities of the metempsychosis, which are given by Plato in the *Republic* and *Phædon;* and we shall have the means of distinguishing the language of Religion from the language of Mysticism. It was the exaggerations of Mysticism which enabled the atheist to bring his charge against Religion—

> Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret
> In terris oppressa gravi sub Religione;

and it was the same exaggerations which supplied him also with his tone of triumph—

> Quare Religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
> Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo.

But who does not see that Religion, as it is certainly not supported, so neither is it really impugned by the exaggerations of Mysticism? It was from this tide of Mysticism, so certain to relapse upon the barren sands of atheism, that Christianity preserved the world, when the Mysticism of the Gnostics, of Plato and of Egypt, was about to supersede Heathen Sensualism by a scarcely worse extreme. If this be thought a harsh or rash judgment, let it be remembered that in Mysticism, as in Sensualism, there is no limit nor measure, that it is impossible to say of the indefinite idea and swelling phrase of Plato, Thus far shalt thou go. We repeat, therefore, that no sound estimate can be made of the evils from which Christianity saved the world, which does not take into the account that mass of superstitious belief and ascetic practice, which, under different forms of Gnosticism, was threatening to substitute an Idolatry of the Imagination for an Idolatry of the Senses. And though it cannot be denied that some of the evils of Mysticism have appeared from time to time under Christian forms, it is not less true that such errors have arisen from a neglect of the primary objects, means and effects of Christianity; that such outbreaks of Mysticism have not unfrequently arisen from a reaction from Sensualism or Ceremonialism, and have produced on the whole beneficial effects; and, lastly, that the evils of Mysticism have always been checked by the strong sense and the practical spirit of Christianity. Nor must it be forgotten that the imperfections of human nature, whether individual or collective, cannot "continue at one stay," but require a troubling of the waters in order to render them healthful. If neither Sensualism, nor Ceremonialism, are unmixed evils, still less is Mysticism; and it is the very object of Religion, (and this may be shown to have been the object and the effect of Primitive Christianity) to oppose Sensualism and Mysticism,

and Ceremonialism, without running into the opposite extremes. That this was the fact will be made still more evident, by referring to another characteristic of Gnosticism, and examining its effects upon Christianity.

Mischievous as are the exaggerations respecting the Creation of the World and a Future State, which were characteristics of the Mysticism of Egypt, of Plato and the Gnostics, tending on the one hand to dæmonology and magic, to ascetic mortifications and spiritual sensualism, to the hermitage and the cloister, and on the other hand to necromancy, purgatory and prayers for the dead, a still greater evil, and more fraught, if possible, with mischief, were those mystical exaggerations respecting the Divine Nature, those "endless genealogies," that "science falsely so called," which it must still be granted bear the impress of a higher origin and a noble character. The mystical dogma of emanations is at once the most universal and most venerable of traditions; so ancient that its source is hidden in the grey mists of extreme antiquity; so universal that traces of it may be found throughout the whole world. Under every form, Persian or Egyptian, Greek or Roman, whether half hidden in the mythological folds of ancient fables, or more clearly expressed in the speculations of Philosophers, whether blended with the Law of Moses in the Cabbala and by Philo, or with the Gospel of Christ by the Gnostics and the Manicheans, in all forms and languages the Mystic Dogma of Emanations intimates the same great truth—that the many proceeded from the one—or, in plainer language, that every thing good and fair, the universal frame of things and all that it contains, material and corporeal, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, *all* proceeds from One Divine Mind, and is a manifestation of His Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. This venerable Dogma teaches us farther, that of the Divine Essence we can know knowing, (for how can the

finite comprehend the infinite?); but that of the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, and also of the Will of God, sufficiently plain indications are made to us in the work and plan of Creation. Such is the meaning of the Dogma of Emanation in every form. But this tradition has unhappily been blended with contradictory attempts to account for the Origin of Evil. Our extracts from Professor Burton's Lectures on the Heresies of the Apostolic Age, have exhibited but a small part of the mass of presumption, superstition, and error, which have arisen from this source,—pouring a muddy and unwholesome stream, not only into mythology and mysticism, but into the language of philosophy. Let us add, that Professor Burton has treated the Mystical Dogma of Emanations, its meaning, origin, progress and developments, together with its bearings on the more mysterious doctrines of Christianity, with a learning, moderation, and fairness which must make his work a storehouse both of valuable information and of judicious criticism, equally deserving the attention of the Scholar, Philosopher, and Divine.

From this whole body of evidence it appears that a constant tradition had come down from the most remote antiquity; that long before the time of the Gnostics, or Plato, or even of the Egyptians, this venerable tradition had its origin; that a term expressive of this tradition was applied to Christ by the earliest converts to Christianity, and was afterwards adopted by St. John. In what sense, and for what object, the term Logos was admitted by the Apostle into Christianity, may be made matter of inquiry; but the fact of its having been so derived and so applied, is established by the text, the notes, and the scriptural quotations in Dr. Burton's work beyond the possibility of doubt.

Both the fact itself and the object of the Apostle is

briefly stated by Professor Burton in the following words: "St. John was as far as possible from being the first to apply the term Logos to Christ; I suppose him to have found it so universally applied, (that is both by Gnostics, and Christians) that he did not attempt to stop the current of popular language, but only kept it in its proper channel, and guarded it from extraneous corruptions*."

What those corruptions were will be seen in our article on Gnosticism, in the works of Cudworth and Mosheim, Brucker, Beausobre, Matter and Professor Burton, and in the remarks of Michaelis on the Gospel of St. John. Professor Burton's facts and inferences respecting the Logos in St. John's Gospel are summed up in his Seventh Lecture, and in a series of valuable notes, and, we may add, that the conclusion at which Professor Burton arrives respecting the Logos of St. John is borne out by the following passage in Bishop Burnet's work upon the Articles of our Church.

"There are indeed points of a very ancient tradition in the world, of three in the Deity: called the Word or the *Wisdom*, and the Spirit or the *Love;* besides the fountain of both these, God; this was believed by those from whom the most ancient philosophers had their doctrines. The Author of the Book of Wisdom, Philo, and the Chaldee Paraphrasts, have many things that show that they had received these traditions from the former ages; but it is not easy to determine what gave the first rise to them†."

If these views are correct, the term Logos, as applied to Christ, represents one of the most ancient, universal, and venerable of traditions. Professor Burton argues that, if St. Paul, when he saw at Athens "altars to the unknown God," might fairly take occasion to reprove the Athenians as "too much given to super-

* *Inquiries*, p. 220. † *Articles*, p. 47.

stitions," and immediately added, "Him whom ye ignorantly worship declare I unto you," there seems no reason why a similar course might not be taken by St. John with the Gnostic, as if he had in effect said—That Word or Wisdom of God, whom you ignorantly seek, declare I unto you. Thus also the Christian Missionary in India might take as his text the opening verses of St. John's Gospel, and might preach to them, "Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God." Nor can there be a doubt, were the Word of God preached thus to the Indian, with a zeal according to knowledge, that he would in deed and in truth find the words of the Apostle verified:—"As many as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe in his name." And if it is thus with the Indian Convert to Christianity in our own day, so also was it in the case of converts from "the endless geneologies" of Gnostic Mysticism to "the only-begotten Son of God." And when we ourselves view the more mysterious articles of our faith in relation to the primary objects, and primary means, and primary effects of Christianity, many doubts and difficulties which have been raised respecting the character, history, and doctrines of Christ, will be obviated or removed; so that having obtained a more perfect understanding of the meaning and spirit of the Scriptures, we shall be less likely to find objections to the expression and the letter—"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, (and we beheld his glory the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

The conclusion to which we are brought by the above series of remarks, is that an inquiry into the *primary* objects and effects of Christianity, not only establishes a large body of evidence respecting the benefits wrought out by Christianity, to wit, in the removal of the three *great evils*, Heathen Sensualism, Gnostic Mysticism,

and Jewish Ceremonialism—throwing much light on the means by which this was effected, that is, upon the character, history, and doctrines of Christ; but that such knowledge tends to draw attention to the yet only in part accomplished objects of Christianity, and to the means by which they are still to be carried out. Such inquiries tend also to prevent our mistaking means for ends, and warn us against that greatest of errors, which would introduce the very evils Christianity was intended to cure, (Sensualism, Mysticism, and Ceremonialism,) under the disguise of remedies. Lastly, an inquiry into the primary objects and means of Christianity draws our attention to whatever was in its nature peculiar to those times, and which requires to be so treated, whenever its application to these times is considered.

To conclude,—we trust we have approached a difficult subject in a right spirit, and with sound information. We trust the information which has been laid before our readers, both respecting Heathen Sensualism and Gnostic Mysticism, however inadequate, has been sound. And we trust also that the spirit in which we have spoken of the more mysterious doctrines of Christianity and their bearings upon Heathenism and Gnosticism, Mysticism and Sensualism, has been a sound spirit.

Δῆλον δὲ τοῦτο καὶ ἐκ τῶν περὶ τοὺς Θεοὺς ἐπαίνων· γελοῖοι γὰρ φαίνονται πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀναφερόμενοι· τοῦτο δὲ συμφαίνει διὰ τὸ γίνεσθαι τοὺς ἐπαίνους δι' ἀναφορᾶς.

That this is so, (that is, that happiness must be spoken of in a more elevated language than that of praise,) may be seen from the effect of praise when applied to the Gods—which is indeed to throw ridicule on what is divine by bringing it down to a human standard and human analogies; for praise is always based on such analogies.—ARISTOTLE'S *Ethics*, b. i. c. 12.

RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION.

THERE is a remark of Aristotle respecting what we have called *religious expression*, in which there is equal depth and soundness, to wit, that the ordinary language of praise, when addressed by man to his Maker, has in it something so incommensurate with the relation between the Creator and the creature, as to be unbecoming, not to say ludicrous; and that it is with a language more elevated than that of common life that man should approach his Maker. Fully admitting the soundness of this remark, and applying it not only to language, but to thoughts and to feelings, (for all these constitute religious expression,) still it becomes necessary to guard Aristotle's sound remark from the misconstruction of those, who would make the elevation of expression which religion requires to consist in exaggeration of thought, feeling, and language; mistaking the vehement, vague, and passionate for the sublime. For as the familiar is too often mistaken for the easy, and the loose for the natural, so the exaggerated is too often mistaken for the sublime. In religious expression this is not a slight error, but, as it proceeds from, so it serves to sustain and to produce a very unsound state of mind.

In order to render our meaning, so far as relates to the vague and passionate in religious expression, somewhat more intelligible to our readers, we will illustrate the above remarks by a reference to two well-known examples of sacred music. In the *Messiah* of Handel we have a music whose simple airs are of a melody so pure, so deep, so reverential, with a harmony so grand and overpowering in the chorus, that the same spirit seems to have inspired the poetry of Milton and the

music of Handel. On the other hand, in the *Stabat Mater* of Rossini there is a tone of vehement and reckless passion, partaking of the vague and the irregular, more expressive of the feelings of Heloise in the Cloister, than of anything which ought, according to the tastes and feelings of Protestants, to be attributed to Mary the Mother of Jesus, or which could, under any circumstance, or by any person, be addressed with propriety to God*. If the plea of passionate grief be advanced as a defence of passionate music, we fall back on what we consider a fair application of the remark we have quoted, and reply that the ordinary language of passion is just as inappropriate as the language of ordinary praise in an address to the Deity. And let us be allowed to add that it is not by making the language of passion, any more than by making the language of praise *excessive*, that it ceases to be ordinary, for what is more common or more mean than the language of excessive praise? For a censure on the language of excessive passion and excessive grief, we should refer our readers to Adam Smith's *Essay on Moral Sentiments*, if the subject were not so nobly and soundly treated by a poet of the school of Milton in our own day.

> Then learned I to despise that far-famed school
> Who place in wickedness their pride, and deem
> Power chiefly to be shown where passions rule,
> And not where they are ruled; in whose new scheme
> Of heroism, self-government should seem
> A thing left out, or something to contemn—
> Whose notions, incoherent as a dream,
> Make strength go *with* the torrent, and not stem,
> For "wicked and thence weak" is not a creed for them.

* On showing this passage to my son, he gave me a very curious and interesting account of the performance of the Stabat Mater at Rome, which will be found, in his own words (for at my request he wrote it down at the time) in the Appendix.

I left these passionate weaklings; I perceived
What took away all nobleness from pride,
All dignity from sorrow; what bereaved
Even genius of respect; they seemed allied
To mendicants that by the high-way side
Expose their self inflicted wounds, to gain
The alms of sympathy—far best denied.
I heard the sorrowful sensualist complain,
If with compassion, not without disdain*.

We are not desiring to limit the field of imagination, nor to tie down the mighty spirit of genius. We have said that the physician must study and describe diseases in order that he may discover and apply remedies; and Shakspere may convince us that the highest and noblest work of genius is as truthful as the most matter-of-fact art. What we object to is the physician setting forth the hectic of consumption, the wanness of atrophy, or the flush of fever, as marks of health and strength. And we object to the deeper and wilder passions being played upon idly, or being evoked for purposes less true to nature and virtue than those of Shakspere. But especially are such idle and vicious displays objectionable when an attempt is made to give them a religious character and sanction.

If the language of piety and religion were better understood, (and it will be best learned from the music of Handel, the poetry of Milton, and the services of our Church,) we persuade ourselves that the good taste and good feeling which attend and watch over sound principle, would reject all exaggeration, meeting with some slight but decisive expression of disgust all such, if we may use the expression, demoralizing displays. As in the over-drawn and highly coloured pictures of female devotees, caricaturing by a pious sentimentality of look and gesture Faith, Hope,

* See Remarks on this School of Poetry, in the Notes to *Philip Van Artevelde.*

and Charity in shop windows, there is a common and a vulgar character, not the less mean for being exaggerated, so in what we have heard of the *Stabat Mater* of Rossini, and in much passionate music of that class, (but never so offensively as when the subject is sacred,) there is a common and a vulgar tone, which all the fine music in the world will not hide, partaking of the vehement and the passionate, the immoderate and the irregular, quite unlike the noble, calm, and elevated character of the Music of Handel and the Poetry of Milton.

These remarks are closely connected with the object and the title of this work. It is this character of the vehement, the immoderate, and the irregular, implying the common and the vulgar, which clings to the mystic language of Plato,—we discern it through all coverings of choice words and harmonious periods, high thoughts and intense feelings—quite unlike the simplicity, purity, practical character, and real elevation of Socrates. To refer once more to the Fifth Book of the *Republic*, which, for the reasons already given, we insist supplies us with *the clue* to the character and characteristics of Plato—Plato has evidently trusted to vehemence of imagination for a victory over vehemence of passion, (or perhaps it would be more correct to say that Plato has trusted to the vehemence of the imagination for a triumph over the exhaustion of the passions,) and he exhibits all the arts of a rhetorician and a mystagogue in working up the feelings of the worshipper. We do not deny that this results in power, and in power directed against the passions; but it is the power of the mystagogue, not the self-command of the worshipper, a power employed by the mystagogue to produce a strong but transitory effect, which, being itself passionate, vague, and excessive, is not sound piety, nor is likely to produce sound religion, is not sound in feeling, and is therefore not likely to be

sound in conduct. Indeed we may appeal from the excesses of Plato, whether in his sensualism or in his mysticism, to the sounder views which he has developed in the noblest of his intermediate Dialogues, the *Philebus*, in which he has expressed the sound principles of Socrates in the striking language of Pythagoras, proving that Indefiniteness is *the* characteristic of evil, while Definiteness is inseparable from the Beautiful and the Good. It is for want of applying the principle of limitation, definiteness and proportion, (exemplified in the theory of Aristotle and the practice of Socrates, in the music of Handel and the poetry of Milton,) that Plato laid the foundation or rather opened the door to all the excesses (intellectual, moral and spiritual,) of the Gnostics. To use a well-known illustration respecting Plato,—Plato bestowed infinite pains and exquisite skill in combing, and plaiting, and adorning his system; but he neglected and overlooked its prevailing character and characteristic, —exaggeration. Socrates took no pains about outward expression or superficial ornament, but worked diligently at correcting and purifying, elevating and strengthening the inner man of the heart—and therefore the characteristics of Socrates are a real elevation and a grand simplicity which the *curiosa felicitas* of Plato, (except where he is working from memory at the image of his master,) is unable to attain.

But creatures moved by wild passions and betrayed by low desires, passions and desires which too often carry away the imagination, even when the conduct has been subjected to a better rule, need spiritual aid sounder than that of Plato, and stronger than that of Socrates,—in a word, rejecting Mysticism as unsound, and finding Philosophy insufficient, they turn to Religion. It is Religion, (need we say the Religion of Christ?) which not only enables us to realize to ourselves the Divine Nature, but to contemplate the union

of the Divine and the Human, and to place this before us, as at once a great mystery and a great exemplar. One of the noblest services of our Church, to which we have before referred, (the beginning of the Christian Year and the Christian Life,) appears to place the Saviour before us in this very character, and for this very purpose, in its unequalled prayer:

"Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when He shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever."

It is in this spirit that Milton has conceived the union of the Divine and the Human in the *Paradise Regained;* nor do we wonder that the greatest of poets, himself a man of strong passions, should have set the highest value on the most Christian of his works. One of the principal objects of these pages has been to distinguish *three* languages, the language of religion, the language of philosophy, and the language of common-life, from one another and from their counterfeits. For the language of religion we have referred to the music of Handel, the poetry of Milton, and, above all, next to the Scriptures, (when studied in sincerity, seeking for truth,) to the Services of our Church. The Philosophers of France before the Revolution desired to have only *two* languages, the language of philosophy and the language of common-life. What was the result? When a savage and brutal populace was dragging Lavoisier to the guillotine, he begged for a brief delay in order that he might complete some part of the language of philo*sophy*. What was the answer? He was told that the

world could do very well without philosophy! This was in effect the very answer which the Philosophers had made to the Clergy; no, we should slander both philosophy and religion by so unfair a statement—the very answer which the *Philosopher* had made to the *Priest*. The anecdote contains a world of instruction to those who study the lesson in a fair and open spirit, not seeking for arguments to support their prejudices, but opening their minds fairly to the irresistible evidence of facts. It tells us that Philosophy and Common-life fell into confusion and ruin, because they had united against Religion; but it tells us also that Philosophy and Common-life had united against Religion, because Religion had long been identified with Superstition. Is it necessary to refer to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and, above all, to the meanest, though most splendid form in which Christianity can be contemplated, in order to account for the contempt and indignation with which Religion was regarded in France before the Revolution? Neither the language of Religion, nor the language of Philosophy, nor the language of Common-life, was really understood. Can it be pretended for a moment that the objects, the means, or the effects of Christianity were really understood? But were Philosophy or Common-life better understood? In order to enable us to answer these questions, it may be well to examine farther into the Political Philosophy of Socrates, and to compare it with the practical lessons (why should we not say the *political lessons?*) of Him "who went about doing good." It is thus that we shall best accomplish what we have undertaken—to exhibit the union of Religion, and Philosophy and Common-life—that union which is a nation's strength.

APPENDIX.

ACCOUNT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE *STABAT MATER* IN ROME.

On Friday evening, (the 14th of April, 1843,) after attending the grand and solemn performance of the *Tenebræ* at the Sistine Chapel, we went to hear the *Stabat Mater* at one of the largest of the many large and splendid churches of Rome.

The service was a late one, beginning about nine o'clock in the evening; and though much fatigued by a hard day's work of picture-seeing and music-hearing, all such sensations were speedily banished by the singular and exciting scene which we there witnessed. I wish I could give you some idea of it.

On entering the church, about half an hour before the commencement of the service, we found it already crammed to suffocation with persons of all classes, ages and sexes. Many were quietly engaged in their private devotions, and apparently perfectly abstracted from the bustling scene which was being enacted within a few paces of them; but many also were anxiously looking for a resting-place where they might await the appointed time, and were conversing with one another in subdued whispers. The body of the church was nearly dark, the chandeliers hanging in black lustreless masses; and the general gloom being even increased by the two or three little lamps, in coloured glasses, burning before some of the altars of the side chapels. A dismal monotonous chant was echoing through the church, performed by some dozen priests who were stationed behind the High Altar.

On this Altar, the only object strongly illuminated in the church, was erected a sort of stage covered in with painted architectural ornaments and silk drapery, bespangled with tinsel and silver stars in truly theatrical style.

In the centre was placed a kneeling figure of the Virgin, represented, in wax or painted wood, as a beautiful young woman splendidly attired, supposed to be mourning over the dead body of Christ,—her breast being pierced with a number of glittering swords. One or two church servants were engaged in lighting a vast number of candles and lamps on and about the altar; and these being covered with coloured paper shades and properly arranged seemed to throw their concentrated light on the painted figure. The effect of this was remarkable, being not only most distinctly and vividly seen, but being the *only* object that was clearly visible in the whole church,—the figure seemed almost to advance into the midst of the darkness and partially to shed its light around; whilst the fainter and fainter lights that tipped projecting columns, gilded cornices, and elaborately carved ceilings, served dimly to mark distances, and tiring the eye with the attempt to make out details, turned back the attention of the spectator to the one object of devotion for the evening.

Presently the chanting ceased, and soon after a young priest made his way, with some difficulty, owing to the crowded state of the church, to the pulpit.

After a short prayer he commenced a discourse, or rather a series of short addresses between which a portion of the *Stabat Mater* was performed. Though varying in words, these addresses, all bore the same form, and were stamped with the same character. They consisted of highly-wrought pictures of the goodness and love of God; of the wickedness and ingratitude of man; of the dreadful bodily suffering of Christ; of the agonies of the Virgin Mother. At the commencement of each he spoke with comparative calmness, addressing the congregation. Gradually, however, he became more and more excited as he proceeded. Elevating his voice to a tone of fury he denounced them all as lost sinners, and upbraided them with inflicting tortures upon the Son of God, inasmuch as it was for their
—s borne.

d suddenly lowering them